





BLACKWELL COMPANIONS TO ANTHROPOLOGY

# A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment

Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees

WILEY-BLACKWELL

# A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment

The *Blackwell Companions to Anthropology* offers a series of comprehensive syntheses of the traditional subdisciplines, primary subjects, and geographic areas of inquiry for the field. Taken together, the series represents both a contemporary survey of anthropology and a cutting edge guide to the emerging research and intellectual trends in the field as a whole.

1. *A Companion to Linguistic Anthropology* edited by Alessandro Duranti
2. *A Companion to the Anthropology of Politics* edited by David Nugent and Joan Vincent
3. *A Companion to the Anthropology of American Indians* edited by Thomas Biolsi
4. *A Companion to Psychological Anthropology* edited by Conerly Casey and Robert B. Edgerton
5. *A Companion to the Anthropology of Japan* edited by Jennifer Robertson
6. *A Companion to Latin American Anthropology* edited by Deborah Poole
7. *A Companion to Biological Anthropology*, edited by Clark Larsen (hardback only)
8. *A Companion to the Anthropology of India*, edited by Isabelle Clark-Decès
9. *A Companion to Medical Anthropology* edited by Merrill Singer and Pamela I. Erickson
10. *A Companion to Cognitive Anthropology* edited by David B, Kronenfeld, Giovanni Bennardo, Victor de Munck, and Michael D. Fischer
11. *A Companion to Cultural Resource Management*, Edited by Thomas King
12. *A Companion to the Anthropology of Education*, Edited by Bradley A.U. Levinson and Mica Pollack
13. *A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees

## Forthcoming

*A Companion to Forensic Anthropology*, edited by Dennis Dirkmaat
*A Companion to the Anthropology of Europe*, edited by Ullrich Kockel, Máiréad Nic Craith, and Jonas Frykman

# A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment

Edited by
Frances E. Mascia-Lees

WILEY-BLACKWELL
A John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., Publication

This edition first published 2011
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. with the exception of Chapter 10 © 2011 Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Chapter 11 © 2011 Evelyn Blackwood

Blackwell Publishing was acquired by John Wiley & Sons in February 2007. Blackwell's publishing program has been merged with Wiley's global Scientific, Technical, and Medical business to form Wiley-Blackwell.

*Registered Office*
John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, United Kingdom

*Editorial Offices*
350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA
9600 Garsington Road, Oxford, OX4 2DQ, UK
The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

For details of our global editorial offices, for customer services, and for information about how to apply for permission to reuse the copyright material in this book please see our website at www.wiley.com / wiley-blackwell.

The right of Frances E. Mascia-Lees to be identified as the author of the editorial material in this work has been asserted in accordance with the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, except as permitted by the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Wiley also publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats. Some content that appears in print may not be available in electronic books.

Designations used by companies to distinguish their products are often claimed as trademarks. All brand names and product names used in this book are trade names, service marks, trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners. The publisher is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book. This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is sold on the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering professional services. If professional advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

A companion to the anthropology of the body and embodiment / edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
p. cm. – (Blackwell companions to anthropology ; 19)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-4051-8949-1 (hardback)
1. Human body–Social aspects. I. Mascia-Lees, Frances E., 1953–
GN298.C65 2011
306.4′613–dc22
2010049391

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

This book is published in the following electronic formats: ePDFs 9781444340457; Wiley Online Library 9781444340488; ePub 9781444340464

Set in 10 / 12.5pt Galliard by SPi Publisher Services, Pondicherry, India
Printed in Singapore

1 2011

*For my husband, Francis C. Lees*

# Contents

*Notes on Contributors* x

*Synopses* xvii

Introduction 1
*Frances E. Mascia-Lees*

1. AESTHETICS 3
Aesthetic Embodiment and Commodity Capitalism
*Frances E. Mascia-Lees*

2. AFFECT 24
Learning Affect / Embodying Race
*Ana Yolanda Ramos-Zayas*

3. AUTOETHNOGRAPHY 46
When I Was A Girl (Notes on Contrivance)
*Roger N. Lancaster*

4. BIOETHICS 72
Embodied Ethics: From the Body as Specimen and Spectacle to the Body as Patient
*Nora L. Jones*

5. BIOPOWER 86
Biopower and Cyberpower in Online News
*Dominic Boyer*

6. BODILINESS 102
The Body Beyond the Body: Social, Material and Spiritual Dimensions of Bodiliness
*Terence Turner*

7. COLONIALISM 119
Bodies under Colonialism
*Janice Boddy*

8. CULTURAL PHENOMENOLOGY 137
Embodiment: Agency, Sexual Difference, and Illness
*Thomas Csordas*

9. DEAD BODIES 157
The Deadly Display of Mexican Border Politics
*Rocío Magaña*

10. DISSECTION 172
The Body in Tatters: Dismemberment, Dissection, and the Return of the Repressed
*Nancy Scheper-Hughes*

11. (TRANS)GENDER 207
Tomboi Embodiment
*Evelyn Blackwood*

12. GENOMICS 223
Embodying Molecular Genomics
*Margaret Lock*

13. HAPTICS 239
Haptic Creativity and the Mid-embodiments of Experimental Life
*Natasha Myers and Joe Dumit*

14. HYBRIDITY 262
Hybrid Bodies of the Scientific Imaginary
*Lesley Sharp*

15. IMPAIRMENT 276
Sporting Bodies: Sensuous, Lived, and Impaired
*P. David Howe*

16. KINSHIP 292
Bodily Betrayal: Love and Anger in the Time of Epigenetics
*Emily Yates-Doerr*

17. MASCULINITIES 307
The Male Reproductive Body
*Emily Wentzell and Marcia C. Inhorn*

18. MEDIATED BODIES 320
Fetal Bodies, Undone
*Lynn M. Morgan*

19. MODIFICATION 338
Blurring the Divide: Human and Animal Body Modifications
*Margo DeMello*

20. NEOLIBERALISM 353
Embodying and Affecting Neoliberalism
*Carla Freeman*

21. PAIN 370
Pain and Bodies
*Jean E. Jackson*

22. PERSONHOOD 388
Embodiment and Personhood
*Andrew J. Strathern and Pamela J. Stewart*

23. POST-SOCIALISM 403
Troubling the Reproduction of the Nation
*Michele Rivkin-Fish*

24. RACIALIZATION 419
How To Do Races With Bodies
*Didier Fassin*

25. THE SENSES 435
Polysensoriality
*David Howes*

26. SENSORIAL MEMORY 451
Embodied Legacies of Genocide
*Carol A. Kidron*

27. TASTING FOOD 467
Tasting between the Laboratory and the Clinic
*Annemarie Mol*

28. TRANSNATIONALISM 481
Bodies-in-Motion: Experiences of Momentum in Transnational Surgery
*Emily McDonald*

29. VIRTUALITY 504
Placing the Virtual Body: Avatar, Chora, Cypherg
*Tom Boellstorff*

*Index* 521

# Notes on Contributors

Evelyn Blackwood is Professor of Anthropology at Purdue University. She has written extensively in areas of sexuality, identity, gender and kinship, including work on Native American female two-spirits, gender transgression, gender and power, and matrilineal kinship. She has authored two monographs on Indonesia, *Webs of Power: Women, Kin and Community in a Sumatran Village* and *Falling into the Lesbi World: Desire and Difference in Indonesia*. Together with Saskia E. Wieringa, she published two anthologies on women's same-sex sexualities and female masculinities, *Female Desires: Same-sex Relations and Transgender Practices across Cultures* and *Women's Sexualities and Masculinities in a Globalizing Asia*.

Janice Boddy is Professor and Chair of the Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto and Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. She is a cultural anthropologist interested in gender, ritual and religion, medical and historical issues, meaning, the body and selfhood, especially in northern Sudan, where she has conducted research since 1976. Her publications include *Wombs and Alien Spirits, Women, Men and the Zar Cult in Northern Sudan* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), *Aman, the Story of a Somali Girl* (with Aman and Virginia Lee Barnes, Vintage 1995) and *Civilizing Women: British Crusades in Colonial Sudan* (Princeton University Press, 2007).

Tom Boellstorff is Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of California, Irvine, and Editor-in-Chief of *American Anthropologist*, the flagship journal of the American Anthropological Association. He is the author of publications in many edited volumes and a range of journals, as well as the books *The Gay Archipelago: Sexuality and Nation in Indonesia* (Princeton University Press, 2005), *A Coincidence of Desires: Anthropology, Queer Studies, Indonesia* (Duke University Press, 2007); and *Coming of Age in Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human* (Princeton University Press, 2008).

Dominic Boyer is Associate Professor of Anthropology at Rice University and has previously held positions at the University of Chicago, Cornell University and the Goethe-Universität Frankfurt. He is the author of *Spirit and System: Media, Intellectuals and the Dialectic in Modern German Culture* (Chicago, 2005) and *Understanding Media: A Popular Philosophy* (Prickly Paradigm, 2007) and has written widely on the intersection of media and knowledge in contemporary Europe. He is currently writing a book on the transformation of news journalism in the era of digital information titled *The Life Informatic* and is editor of the "Expertise: Cultures and Technologies of Knowledge" book series for Cornell University Press.

Thomas J. Csordas is Professor of Anthropology at the University of California San Diego. His research interests include anthropological theory, comparative religion, medical and psychological anthropology, cultural phenomenology and embodiment, globalization and social change, and language and culture. Among his publications are *The Sacred Self: A Cultural Phenomenology of Charismatic Healing* (1994); (edited) *Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self* (1994). *Language, Charisma, and Creativity: Ritual Life in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (1997; paperback ed. 2002); *Body/Meaning/Healing* (2002); and (edited) *Transnational Transcendence: Essays on Religion and Globalization* (2009).

Margo DeMello received her Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology from U.C. Davis, and lectures at Central New Mexico Community College. Her books include *Bodies of Inscription: A Cultural History of the Modern Tattoo Community* (2000), *Stories Rabbits Tell: A Natural and Cultural History of a Misunderstood Creature* (2003), *Why Animals Matter: The Case for Animal Protection* (2007), *The Encyclopedia of Body Adornment* (2007), *Feet and Footwear* (2009), *and Teaching the Animal: Human Animal Studies Across the Disciplines* (2010), and she is currently writing *Animals and Society* for Columbia University Press and *Faces Around the World* for ACL-CIO.

Joseph Dumit is Director of the program in Science and Technology Studies and Professor of Anthropology at U.C. Davis. He is the author of *Picturing Personhood: Brain Scans and Biomedical Identity* (Princeton University Press, 2004); and the coeditor of *Cyborgs & Citadels: Anthropological Interventions in Emerging Sciences and Technologies* (with Gary L. Downey; SAR Press, 1997), *Cyborg Babies: From Techno-Sex to Techno-Tots* (with Robbie Davis-Floyd; Routledge, 1998), and *Biomedicine as Culture* (with Regula Burri; Routledge, 2007). He was associate editor of *Culture, Medicine & Psychiatry* for 10 years. He's currently finishing *Drugs for Life: Growing Health through Facts and Pharmaceuticals*.

Didier Fassin, anthropologist, sociologist and medical doctor, is the James Wolfensohn Professor of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, and Director of Studies at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris. The founding director of French Interdisciplinary Research Institute on Social Issues, he conducts studies in political and moral anthropology. He is the author of *The Empire of Trauma* (Princeton UP 2009) and *La Raison Humanitaire* (Seuil 2010), and the

editor of *Contemporary States of Emergency* (Zone Books, 2010) and *Les Nouvelles Frontières de la Société Française* (La Découverte, 2010).

Carla Freeman is Winship Distinguished Research Professor, Departments of Anthropology and Women's Studies, Emory University. Her publications include a book, *High Tech and High Heels in the Global Economy: Women, Work, and Pink Collar Identities in the Caribbean* (Duke University Press, 2000) and numerous articles on globalization, gender, and changing relations of production, consumption, and social class. She is currently completing a new book, *Neoliberal Respectability: Entrepreneurship and the Making of a New Caribbean Middle Class*.

P. David Howe is Senior Lecturer in the Anthropology of Sport in the School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences as well as the Peter Harrison Centre for Disability Sport at Loughborough University. David trained as a medical anthropologist and he is author of *Sport, Professionalism and Pain: Ethnographies of Injury and Risk* (Routledge, 2004) and *The Cultural Politics of the Paralympic Movement: Through the Anthropological Lens* (Routledge, 2008).

David Howes is Professor of Anthropology at Concordia University, Montreal. He is also the Director of the Special Individualized Programs at Concordia, where select students are able to design their own interdisciplinary master's or doctoral degree curricula. He has carried out fieldwork in the anthropology of the senses in Melanesia and Argentina as well as at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford. He is a Founding Editor of *The Senses and Society*, General Editor of the *Sensory Formations* series, and the Director of the Concordia Sensoria Research Team (CONSERT). See further www.david-howes.com. His latest book is *The Sixth Sense Reader*.

Marcia C. Inhorn is the William K. Lanman Jr Professor of Anthropology and International Affairs at Yale University, where she also directs the Council on Middle East Studies. A specialist on Middle Eastern gender and health issues, Inhorn is the author of four books on infertility and assisted reproductive technologies in the Arab world. As founding editor of the *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* and co-editor of the Berghahn Book series on "Fertility, Sexuality and Reproduction," she was the inaugural Diane Middlebrook and Carl Djerassi Visiting Professor at University of Cambridge's Centre for Gender Studies in Fall 2010.

Jean E. Jackson, Professor of Anthropology in MIT's Department of Anthropology, received her Ph.D. from Stanford. Her ethnographic research in a pain clinic in a New England rehabilitation hospital resulted in "*Camp Pain": Talking with Chronic Pain Patients* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000). Recent published work on pain includes "Translating the Pain Experience," and "The Cross-cultural Evidence on 'Extreme Behaviors': What Can It Tell Us?" She has also carried out fieldwork in Mexico and Guatemala. Her doctoral research in the Central Northwest Amazon investigated patrilineal kinship, social identity, and linguistic exogamy. She has published extensively on the Colombian indigenous movement.

Nora Jones, Ph.D. is the Associate Director of Graduate Studies and Senior Fellow at the Center for Bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr Jones is a visual anthropologist

whose research focuses on the visual communication of science, the anthropology of the body, popular understandings of science, and culture and bioethics.

Carol A. Kidron is a lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Haifa, Israel. Her publications include *Embracing the Lived Memory of Genocide: Holocaust Survivor and Descendant Renegade Memory-Work at the House of Being* (2010) and *Toward an Ethnography of Silence: The Lived Presence of the Past in the Everyday Life of Holocaust Trauma Survivors and their Descendants in Israel* (2009). Kidron has undertaken field work with Holocaust trauma descendants in Israel and children of Cambodian genocide survivors in Cambodia and Canada. Her research interests include: personal and collective memory, critique of therapeutic discourse and Psychological Anthropology.

Roger N. Lancaster is Professor of Anthropology and Director of Cultural Studies at George Mason University. His books include *Life is Hard: Machismo, Danger, and the Intimacy of Power in Nicaragua* (1992), which won the C. Wright Mills Award and the Ruth Benedict Prize, and *The Trouble with Nature: Sex in Science and Popular Culture* (2003). His new book, *Sex Panic and the Punitive State* (2011), reflects the author's continuing efforts to understand how sexual mores, racial hierarchies, and class predicaments interact with political economy in a volatile world.

Margaret Lock is Marjorie Bronfman Professor Emerita in Social Studies of Medicine, McGill University. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, Officier de L'Ordre national du Québec, and Officer of the Order of Canada. Lock has authored or co-edited 15 books and written over 190 articles; her monographs, *Encounters with Aging: Mythologies of Menopause in Japan and North America* and *Twice Dead: Organ Transplants and the Reinvention of Death*, have won numerous awards. Her recent co-authored book is titled *An Anthropology of Biomedicine*. Lock's current research deals with post-genomic knowledge, its production and circulation among basic scientists, clinicians, and society at large, with emphasis on Alzheimer's disease.

Rocío Magaña is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Rutgers University. Her research on the death and injury of border-crossers in the American Southwest examines the politics of protection, risk, and rescue at the margins of the nation. She is currently working on *Bodies on the Line: Life, Death, and Authority on the Arizona – Mexico Border*, a book about the operationalization of physical exertion within the politics of border policing. She has been awarded fellowships by the American Anthropological Association, Dartmouth College, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the University of Michigan National Center for Institutional Diversity.

Frances E. Mascia-Lees is Professor of Anthropology at Rutgers University. Her primary areas of expertise are the body / embodiment; consumer capitalism; aesthetics and politics; and gender, race, and difference. She served as Editor-in-Chief of *American Anthropologist*, the flagship journal of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), from 2001 to 2006 and as an International Scholar with the Open Society Institute from 2007 to 2010, where she has worked with young scholars from all over Eastern Europe and Central Asia on educational transformation, most extensively in Bulgaria and Kosovo. She is author of numerous articles and five

books, including *Gender and Difference in a Globalizing World* and *Taking a Stand in a Postfeminist World: Toward an Engaged Cultural Criticism*, and editor of *Tattoo, Torture, Mutilation and Adornment: The Denaturalization of the Body in Culture and Text*. She was awarded the AAA / Mayfield Award for Excellence in the Undergraduate Teaching of Anthropology in 1998 and the AAA's President's Award in 2005.

Emily Anne McDonald is a Ph.D. candidate in Anthropology at Rutgers University researching transnational medical travel between the United States and Argentina. Her dissertation project included fifteen months of ethnographic research conducted in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and was supported through a Fulbright Hays Dissertation Award and the National Science Foundation. Most recently the recipient of a University Louis Bevier Dissertation Fellowship, her broader interests include embodiment, race and the politics of transnational health. She is co-editor of a forthcoming symposium issue of *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* dedicated to gender and medical tourism, and her work has been published in the *Journal of General Internal Medicine*

Annemarie Mol is Professor of Anthropology of the Body at the University of Amsterdam. She is the author of *The Body Multiple* (Duke UP 2002) and *The Logic of Care* (Routledge 2008) and co-editor of *Care in Practice* (with Ingunn Moser and Jeannette Pols, Transcript Verlag 2010), *Complexities* (with John Law, Duke UP 2002) and *Differences in Medicine* (with Marc Berg, Duke UP 1998). Her articles are concerned with bodies, technologies, ontological politics, social topology and specificity. Currently she is engaged in an ERC-funded long term research project "The Eating Body in Western Practice and Theory."

Lynn M. Morgan is Mary E. Woolley Professor of Anthropology at Mount Holyoke College. She has authored three books – *Icons of Life: A Cultural History of Human Embryos* (University of California Press, 2009), *Community Participation in Health: The Politics of Primary Care in Costa Rica* (Cambridge, 1993), and *Fetal Subjects, Feminist Positions* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999) – and over 30 articles. Her awards include fellowships from the National Science Foundation, National Endowment for Humanities, Social Science Research Council, and most recently from the School for Advanced Research. She is currently writing about reproductive governance in Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Mexico.

Natasha Myers is an Assistant Professor in the Departments of Anthropology and Science and Technology Studies at York University. She completed her Ph.D. in 2007 in the History | Anthropology | Science, Technology & Society Program at MIT. Her forthcoming book, *Molecular Embodiments: Modeling Proteins and Making Scientists in the Contemporary Biosciences*, examines cultures of pedagogy and visualization among protein crystallographers and biological engineers, and will be published by Duke University Press.

Ana Yolanda Ramos-Zayas is Associate Professor of Anthropology and Latino Studies at Rutgers University. She is the author of *National Performances: Class, Race, and*

*Space in Puerto Rican Chicago* (University of Chicago Press, 2003) and co-author of *Latino Crossings: Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and the Politics of Race and Citizenship* (Routledge, 2003). Her latest ethnography, *Street Therapists: Affect, Race, and Neoliberal Personhood in Latino Newark* (forthcoming, University of Chicago Press), examines the manifestation of the Latin American ideology of racial democracy among U.S. Latino populations, particularly Puerto Ricans and Brazilians, and the emotive requirements of capital on urban populations.

Michele Rivkin-Fish is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Her work explores how Russia's reproductive politics and health care reform illuminate broader political, economic, and cultural transformations of post-socialism. She has published on memory and class, gender politics and sex education, and the links between demographic politics and nationalism. Rivkin-Fish's monograph *Women's Health in Post-Soviet Russia: The Politics of Reproduction* won the 2006 Eileen Basker Prize for Outstanding Research in Gender and Health. She recently co-edited, with Elena Trubina, the volume *Dilemmas of Diversity*: *Analyses of "Culture" and "Difference" by US and Russian-Based Scholars.*

Nancy Scheper-Hughes is the Chancellor's Professor of Anthropology at University of California, Berkeley, where she also directs the doctoral program in medical anthropology. Her research, writings and publications focus on violence, poverty, hunger, and social suffering; the globalization of medicine and biomedical technologies; and the commodification of life and death. Her publications include *Death without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil* (1993), *Saints, Scholars and Schizophrenics: Mental Illness in Rural Ireland* (1979, 1999) both published by the University of California Press, and several edited volumes including (most recently) *Violence in War and Peace* (with Philippe Bourgois) Blackwell 2004; *Commodifying Bodies* (with Loic Wacquant) Sage, 2004. Scheper-Hughes is the founding Director of Organs Watch and she has advised the WHO, the UN office on drugs and human trafficking (Vienna), the European Parliament, Council of Europe and many governments on human trafficking for organs and tissues. She collaborated in the production of several film documentaries, most recently, "H.O.T – The Human Organ Trade" (Rome, 2009) and "Kidney Pirates" for Dan Rather Reports (2009) She is an emissary of the Istanbul Conservatory on organs transplant.

Lesley Sharp is Ann Whitney Olin Professor in Anthropology at Barnard College and Senior Research Scientist in Sociomedical Sciences at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University. She is the author of *Strange Harvest: Organ Transplants, Denatured Bodies, and the Transformed Self* (California UP 2006), which was awarded the New Millennium Book Prize by the Society for Medical Anthropology, and *Bodies, Commodities, and Biotechnologies; Death, Mourning, and Scientific Desire in the Realm of Human Organ Transfer* (Columbia UP 2007), based on the 2005 Leonard Hastings Schoff Memorial Lectures at Columbia.

Pamela J. Stewart (Strathern) and Andrew Strathern are a husband and wife research team (Department of Anthropology, University of Pittsburgh). They have published over 35 books and over 200 articles on their research in the

Pacific, Asia, and Europe. Their many co-authored books include *Witchcraft, Sorcery, Rumors, and Gossip* (Cambridge University Press, 2004); *and Kinship in Action: Self and Group* (2010, Prentice Hall). Their recent co-edited books include *Exchange and Sacrifice* (Carolina Academic Press, 2008), *Religious and Ritual Change: Cosmologies and Histories* (Carolina Academic Press, 2009), and *Ritual (*Ashgate Publishing, 2010). Their web page is www.pitt.edu / ~strather.

Terence Turner is Emeritus Professor of Anthropology at the University of Chicago and Adjunct Professor of Anthropology at Cornell University. He has conducted field research with the Kayapo of Central Brazil since 1962. His writings on the Kayapo cover cosmology, family and kinship relations, political and social organization, myth, ritual, history, politics, specialized modes of discourse, the appropriation of video and self-representation in that medium, the production of social value, the role of aestheticized forms of value in the construction of bodiliness and personhood, and the cultural patterning of objectification, subjective perspectives and emotions. He has also published on the application of aspects of Marxian theory to anthropology, and the theoretical basis of anthropological approaches to human rights, multiculturalism, and activism in support of the rights, territorial and ecological resources of indigenous peoples.

Emily Wentzell is an Assistant Professor in the University of Iowa Department of Anthropology. Her research combines approaches from medical anthropology, gender studies and science and technology studies to examine sexual health interventions' gendered social consequences. She is currently writing a book based on ethnographic fieldwork in a Cuernavaca, Mexico, hospital, examining older, working-class men's use and rejection of erectile dysfunction treatments and the influence of changing sexual function on their ideas about masculinity.

Emily Yates-Doerr is a postdoctoral fellow at the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research, and a graduate of New York University's doctoral program in Anthropology. Her research examines understandings of dietary health and techniques of body weight management in the context of Guatemala's "nutrition transition." She has been traveling to the Guatemalan highlands annually since 1999 and conducted sixteen months of fieldwork in 2008–9. This dissertation research was funded by a Wenner–Gren Fieldwork Grant and a Fulbright Hays Award. Her chapter in this book was written with support of a Dean's Award from New York University.

# Synopses

## 1. AESTHETICS

### Aesthetic Embodiment and Commodity Capitalism

*Frances E. Mascia-Lees*

In a long tradition extending from Marx to the contemporary anthropology of the senses, the anesthetizing effect of commodities on the body has been a central claim and the political liabilities of aestheticizing everyday life through commodity consumption, a main concern. However, few anthropologists have investigated the relationship of aestheticization to the senses in the lives of actual subjects, particularly in centers of commodity consumption. This chapter demonstrates the very different picture of consumer capitalism that emerges when the aesthetic is treated as a form of embodiment and investigated ethnographically.

## 2. AFFECT

### Learning Affect / Embodying Race

*Ana Yolanda Ramos-Zayas*

The central focus of this chapter is on how feelings and sentiments intersect with everyday evaluations of racial difference and on-going processes of racial learning under neoliberalism. It draws from ethnographic fieldwork conducted in a Puerto Rican and a Brazilian neighborhood in Newark, NJ. It demonstrates how Latinos in the urban United States navigate unfamiliar racial situations through the deployment of an emotional epistemology: a set of rules, assumptions, and interpretations of how others feel or should feel and the creation or performance of an affective persona.

## 3. AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

### When I Was a Girl (Notes on Contrivance)

*Roger N. Lancaster*

This chapter treats autoethnography as an embodied practice, using events, conversations, and actions “on the ground” to reveal something of the texture of lived experience.

It focuses on Queer theory and its treatment of "camp" as an ironic performance and parody as a model for politics. It shows that the gender acts and body practices associated with camp subcultures are undertaken less in the "performative" than in the "subjunctive" mode; that is, they are staged as forms of play, pretense, or make-believe; it explores the disjuncture such practices pose for political activism.

## 4. BIOETHICS

### Embodied Ethics: From the Body as Specimen and Spectacle to the Body as Patient

*Nora L. Jones*

Several conceptions of the body are implicated in bioethics: the patient's body as seen by the practitioner, the ill or diseased body in popular culture, and the patient's understanding of her own body. The first two conceptualizations have come to dominate contemporary bioethics thinking; they are both, however, essentially disembodied. This chapter reveals how moving the locus of attention to the body as patient – to an embodied, body-in-context-in-action self – enlivens bioethics and fundamentally changes how we understand the relationships among selves, bodies, illness, and decision-making by all of the stakeholders implicated in questions of concern to bioethics.

## 5. BIOPOWER

### Biopower and Cyberpower in Online News

*Dominic Boyer*

This chapter engages Foucault's concept of biopower through the somewhat unlikely medium of online news. It argues that Foucault's relative inattention to questions of media and mediation in his analysis of modern power underestimates the role that news media and modern publics have played in the consolidation of biopolitical relations of governance. It explores the rise of digital publicity since the 1980s, showing that certain features of cyberpolitical discourse strongly resemble Foucault's model of modern power as a system or network of relations, leading to the argument that Foucault's biopower was richly infused with a cyberpolitical imagination from its conception.

## 6. BODILINESS

### The Body Beyond the Body: Social, Material and Spiritual Dimensions of Bodiliness

*Terence Turner*

"The body" – considered a "total social fact" by Mauss – essentially consists of activities and transformative processes that continually make and unmake the material, social, and cultural relations that constitute its form and content. This chapter explores the transformative processes of formation and dissolution that accomplish these effects. Focusing on the Kayapo of Brazil, it shows how an elaborate semiotic system of adornment and other treatments of the surface, external organs, and extremities are directed toward socially valued ends and how externalized forms of bodiliness such as ceremonial costumes and ritual masks complete the social regulation of bodily objectification and disintegration.

## 7. COLONIALISM

Bodies under Colonialism
*Janice Boddy*

This chapter concerns the subtle means by which colonizers have sought to reform subjects' customary bodily practices and encourage the adoption of European "commonsense" ways. To assess this, it focuses on a campaign by British officials in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan (1898–1956) to stop the widespread practice of female genital cutting among Arab Sudanese. Colonial efforts involved training indigenous medical midwives, and were aimed at both individuals – to generate "morally responsible" persons – and populations – to increase fertility levels to create a steady supply of paid labor. Through this process local bodily practices were transformed, yet their continuity into post-colonial times may also have been assured.

## 8. CULTURAL PHENOMENOLOGY

Embodiment: Agency, Sexual Difference, and Illness
*Thomas Csordas*

This chapter elaborates an understanding of embodiment as an indeterminate methodological field defined by perceptual experience, mode of presence, and engagement in the world. It presents an outline of the structure of human agency in the relation between our bodies and the world; a discussion of how this structure is refracted and complicated by sexual difference; and ten components of corporeality that must be taken into account in examining embodiment as a methodological field. Three concrete examples of illness experience – phantom limb syndrome, chronic fatigue syndrome, and environmental illness – are used to illustrate fundamental features of embodiment.

## 9. DEAD BODIES

The Deadly Display of Mexican Border Politics
*Rocío Magaña*

Anthropological analyses of dead bodies privilege the symbolic aspects surrounding burial and mourning rituals or the truth-seeking endeavors of forensic and scientific practice. In examining the public display and recovery of bodies on the northern Mexican border, this chapter analyzes these two trends, revealing a politics in which the management of dead bodies and their representations become a vehicle for political productions of authority and national identity. Tracing the public display of the dead emerging at the legal and territorial margins of the state, it examines how failure to protect life can be mobilized to restore claims of sovereign authority.

## 10. DISSECTION

The Body in Tatters: Dismemberment, Dissection, and the Return of the Repressed
*Nancy Scheper-Hughes*

This chapter is an anthropological / ethnographic / ethno-theological reflection on the body as a "fearfully and wondrously made" (Psalm 139) corporeal package and

assemblage that is dismantled, disarticulated, and dissected in life or in death at great cost. It focuses on "body-love," an underexamined and undertheorized topic in the anthropology of bodies. Body-love refers to an intuitive, existentially given appreciation of the body's design and the inalienability of its parts, both obvious ones such as the head, trunk, limbs, and skin, and silent and 'absent' organs and tissues that make their presence known through disease, wounding, and excision.

## 11. (TRANS)GENDER

### Tomboi Embodiment

*Evelyn Blackwood*

Anthropological attention to transgender individuals cross-culturally has focused on instances when a non-normative expression of gender results in the renaming of bodies. While these studies have helped to elucidate the social construction of gender, transgendered bodies remain primarily objects and not subjects of study. This chapter takes a different approach to the bodies of transgendered individuals by attending to the physical sensations that are produced by and experienced in social interactions. It demonstrates the way tombois, female-bodied individuals who identify as men in Indonesia, rely on their embodied feelings to substantiate, confirm, and negotiate their sense of self as men.

## 12. GENOMICS

### Embodying Molecular Genomics

*Margaret Lock*

Anthropological research into the social ramifications of genetic testing has focused on single gene disorders and the impact of estimations of increased risk for specific conditions on tested individuals and family relations. However, research in molecular genomics and epigenomics shows that most human genes are neither necessary nor sufficient to cause disease, making such estimates exceedingly problematic. Ethnographic findings on the impact of testing for late-onset Alzheimer disease are used in this chapter to argue that research into the social ramifications of individual molecular embodiment should recognize the entanglement of social, cultural, historical, political, and economic variables with material bodies.

## 13. HAPTICS

### Haptic Creativity and the Mid-embodiments of Experimental Life

*Natasha Myers and Joseph Dumit*

Anthropology and Science & Technology Studies (STS) have investigated many aspects of laboratory experiments and discovery practices, but they have not focused directly on the embodied, affective dimensions of scientists' engagement with their instruments. This chapter uses a cultural phenomenological approach to examine two extended moments of excited engagement between researchers, visualization tools, and lively data that illustrate "haptic creativity," the improvisational, exploratory aspect of scientific experiments. The chapter proposes "mid-embodiment" as a concept for understanding how bodies of scientists and bodies of data "move" each other, inventing new forms of knowledge and new forms of science.

## 14. HYBRIDITY

### Hybrid Bodies of the Scientific Imaginary

*Lesley Sharp*

Hybrid projects are inherently moral. This chapter interrogates the relevance of biosociality as an effective category of analysis for understandings kinship relations as sociomoral projects. It focuses on xenotransplantation, a highly experimental realm of transplant research whose practitioners are determined to overcome significant immunological hurdles so that the failed organs of human patients might be replaced with those derived from primates and, more recently, pigs. The chapter argues that a revival of seemingly archaic anthropological notions of kinship-as-moral-project may deepen our understandings of hybrid projects in science.

## 15. IMPAIRMENT

### Sporting Bodies: Sensuous, Lived, and Impaired

*P. David Howe*

Traditionally, anthropology has struggled with sensual representations of otherness. Focusing on the impaired sporting body, this chapter presents an embodied understanding of sensuousness of difference. Although sport may seem an all-too-obvious cultural milieu in which the body is of central importance, little ethnographic research has been undertaken in this context to explore the physical issue of impairment in the social context of disablism. To unpack this complex relationship this chapter uses a Paralympic running body to illuminate how the disciplined and habitual body can be a catalyst for a robust phenomenological exploration of the sensuous, lived, and impaired body.

## 16. KINSHIP

### Bodily Betrayal: Love and Anger in the Time of Epigenetics

*Emily Yates-Doerr*

By examining how kinship systems are shaped through the continuous biological reproduction of feeding and eating, this chapter extends anthropological analyses of "alternative reproductive technologies." It focuses on the dilemmas faced by women in Xela, Guatemala, who live among changing food economies and rising rates of metabolic illness, and who must reform their existing skills and expertise to accommodate new quantitative technologies of health. As epigenetic discourses emphasize the impact of women's nutrition on the health of their kin, these technologies affect not only the way they understand their food and their bodies, but also their pathways of reproduction.

## 17. MASCULINITIES

### The Male Reproductive Body

*Emily Wentzell and Marcia C. Inhorn*

This chapter examines men's use of medical technologies to produce forms of reproductive and sexual embodiment that make sense in contexts where definitions of "good" masculinity are contested. Focusing on erectile dysfunction treatment in Mexico and assisted reproductive technologies in the Middle East, it shows that men

who experience sexual and reproductive difficulties use medical interventions and alter their embodiment to encourage particular kinds of social relations, overcome the social and physical obstacles that hamper erectile function or fertility, and embody new forms of masculinity and conjugality, self-consciously shaping the webs of affective relationships in which sex and reproduction occur.

## 18. MEDIATED BODIES

### Fetal Bodies, Undone

*Lynn M. Morgan*

Contemporary understandings of human and non-human fetal bodies are generated and dominated by corporate media in the service of consumer capitalism. Digitally manipulated bodies – including beautiful, sanitized, appealing fetal bodies – are increasingly constituted by advertisers within what philosopher Susan Bordo calls an "empire of images." Through an analysis of fetal imagery used in car advertising, this chapter unpacks the workings and implications of this trend, which underwrites the purported biological veracity of fetal development and provides grounding for political projects that recast reproductive morality as a matter of fetal materiality and fetal well-being.

## 19. MODIFICATION

### Blurring the Divide: Human and Animal Body Modifications

*Margo DeMello*

Body modifications in human cultures serve a variety of functions. One of the primary functions is to distinguish the human or cultured body from the animal or natural body. This chapter addresses the many reasons for body modification, focusing primarily on how it serves to clarify the human / animal border. In addition, the chapter goes on to explore the many ways in which humans modify animal bodies to serve their own purposes. The chapter takes the position that the primary purpose of the human modification of the animal body is to bring non-human animals under human and cultural control.

## 20. NEOLIBERALISM

### Embodying and Affecting Neoliberalism

*Carla Freeman*

Entrepreneurship can be seen as a central crucible of neoliberalism and its burgeoning 'affective' economy. As a feminist ethnographic project, this chapter takes up the affective labors of life and work among women entrepreneurs in contemporary Barbados, analyzing how entrepreneurship becomes a mode of neoliberal subjectification that gives rise to new articulations of gender and class. It focuses on how new ideas of 'intensive' parenting; intimate 'partnership' marriages; and 'prosperity'-oriented, therapeutic spirituality are embraced as a means of constituting affective economies that both span and remake 'private' and 'public' life.

## 21. PAIN

### Pain and Bodies

*Jean E. Jackson*

Because a given pain's meaning is the primary determinant of the experience, because pain is invisible and loaded with ontological and epistemic uncertainty and is deeply intersubjective, and because it universally constitutes a symbol of disorder and disequilibrium,

pain offers fertile terrain for anthropological research. This chapter reveals fundamental dilemmas and paradoxes related to the body as conceptualized in the West. It addresses the fundamental tension between pain as subjectively understood and pain as objectively analyzed to illustrate some of the problems that derive from mind / body dualism, and the problems it poses for researchers interested in studying pain cross-culturally.

## 22. PERSONHOOD

### Embodiment and Personhood

*Andrew J. Strathern and Pamela J. Stewart*

Embodiment and personhood are significant themes in contemporary cultural anthropology. Using fieldwork from the authors' extensive experience in the Pacific, Europe, and Asia, this chapter links these themes together, showing how crucial aspects of personhood are played out in embodied ways. By focusing on magical language and its bodily expression; acts of divination; song, dance, and poetry; and expressions of identity in folktales, it compares approaches to personhood through the paradigm of embodiment and cognitive theory, arguing that a focus on embodiment brings us closer to agency and practice, individual creativity, improvisation, and change.

## 23. POST-SOCIALISM

### Troubling the Reproduction of the Nation

*Michele Rivkin-Fish*

The analytic of 'embodiment' has enabled anthropologists to reveal the many ways in which bodily states and processes refract broader visions of the social order. In post-socialist contexts where the remaking of the body politic is uncertain and acrimonious, the reproduction of bodies is also highly fraught. This chapter examines how nationalist agendas compete with medical struggles for the power to engineer Russian women's reproduction. It argues that understanding the specific biopolitical strategies deployed in abortion and reproductive politics – in post-socialist contexts and beyond – requires insights into the embodied world deemed to be in crisis.

## 24. RACIALIZATION

### How To Do Races with Bodies

*Didier Fassin*

This chapter focuses on the complex phenomenon of racialization, the process through which individuals or groups are construed as distinct on the basis of essentialized bodily differences. Using examples from France, South Africa and the United States, it analyzes how bodies become racialized through intersubjective processes, which are reinforced by the objectification of racial differences, and on how races become embodied. It concludes that the body is not only that through which one apprehends the world in the present, but is also where the past is both objectively and subjectively enshrined.

## 25. THE SENSES

### Polysensoriality

*David Howes*

This chapter tracks the study of the senses from its emergence as an object of study in the physical anthropology of the late19th century when focus was on measurement and experiment and psychophysics was the prevailing paradigm to the cultural

anthropology of the late 20th / early 21st century when emphasis shifted to understanding meanings and experiences of the senses. It focuses on how the accumulation of accounts of the ways in which the senses are differently constructed and lived in different cultural contexts has shattered contemporary certainties of the Western psychology of perception, demonstrating that the sensorium is an historical formation.

## 26. SENSUAL MEMORY

Embodied Legacies of Genocide

*Carol A. Kidron*

According to Holocaust and Genocide Studies and to psychological trauma-related paradigms, an impermeable 'wall of silence' exists between trauma survivors and their descendants, which only permits the transmission of pathological inter-generationally transmitted effects of post-trauma. Contrary to the literature, this chapter focuses on ethnographic accounts of Holocaust descendants that depict the transmission of embodied memories and the emergence of a corporeal genocidal legacy. It shows that parent – child intimate sensorial engagement and the resultant embodied memories form an experiential matrix of Holocaust presence that sustains a familial 'lived-body memory' in the everyday social milieu.

## 27. TASTE AND THE EATING BODY

Tasting between the Laboratory and the Clinic

*Annemarie Mol*

Laboratory sciences seek to establish universal facts about bodies. However, bodies-in-practice differ from one site to the next. This chapter focuses on how bodily-abilities-in-laboratories differ from bodily-abilities-in-clinics. It explores taste as it is manifested in these two settings, suggesting that bodies are both adaptable and obdurate in their ability to taste food. It shows how even such neurological claims that people with mental deficiencies, such as dementia, lose enjoyment in food as they lose the ability to taste, is understood differently in differing contexts and it assesses the limitations of understanding and expressing the experience of taste through linguistic metaphors.

## 28. TRANSNATIONALISM

Bodies-in-Motion: Experiences of Momentum in Transnational Surgery

*Emily McDonald*

Current approaches to the anthropology of bodies and movement, which tend to focus on "moving bodies" circulating through geographic space or "body motion," the gestures of individual agents, reveal little about the embodied experiences of movement itself. This chapter examines the embodiment of movement among transnational patients traveling to Buenos Aires, Argentina for surgery. It draws on the notion of "momentum" to account for their non-congruous temporal and spatial ways of "being-in-the-world" and to draw attention to how bodies not only move through, but are also moved by, multiple subjects, spaces, objects, and temporalities.

## 29. VIRTUALITY

### Placing the Virtual Body: Avatar, Chora, Cypherg

*Tom Boellstorff*

Virtual worlds – places of human culture realized by computer programs through the Internet – have become an important domain of human culture. From game-oriented to open-ended virtual worlds, from virtual worlds embedded in social networking sites to those designed for children, virtual worlds influence our physical-world lives and interact with other technologies. This chapter explores the crucial issue of how virtual worlds transform notions of the body. Drawing upon a range of ethnographic and theoretical arguments, it focuses on the pluralization of place that virtual worlds entail and its foundational implications for understandings of the body in virtual and physical worlds.

# Introduction

*Frances E. Mascia-Lees*

Once the province of medical science and certain schools of philosophy, "the body" emerged in the late 1970s as a central site from which scholars across the humanities and social sciences questioned the ontological and epistemological basis of almost all forms of inquiry. In anthropology "the body" became such a central concept and significant object of study that by the mid-1980s, the study of "the body" burgeoned into a fully formed subfield: "the anthropology of the body." For many anthropologists at the time, it was clear that the questions of power and oppression that were on the agendas of many scholars could not be addressed without first challenging ideologies that naturalized sex, gender, and racial difference through discourses and representations of the body. At the same time, medical anthropologists, imbricated in these agendas in multiple ways, revealed how conceptions of the body were central to substantive work in medical anthropology and began the work of problematizing "the body" (see Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987).

Since then, "the body" has come to be understood as simultaneously subject and object, meaningful and material, individual and social and has served as the basis of a stunningly large number of inquiries in the discipline. Whether understood as text, symbol, or habitus, the body has proved a fertile site from which anthropologists have mounted refutations of abstract, universalizing models and ideologies and interrogated operations of power, systems of oppression, and possibilities for agency and political change. The volume simultaneously reflects this history of inquiry; represents the most current approaches, insights, and conceptualizations of the body; and illuminates the newest arenas in which it is being investigated. Within its chapters, authors address a broad topic – ranging from "aesthetics" to "virtuality" – assess the treatment of that topic within the history of the discipline, contextualize their own research within that history, and demonstrate the significance of their ideas and conclusions for future work in the area.

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Two of the most significant insights that have become central to the anthropology of the body since its inception are evident in the title of many of the chapters. The first suggests that the very construct "the body," reproduces assumptions about universality and normativity. This necessitates that "the body" be specified – the *virtual* body or *dead* body, for example – or pluralized: thus, many authors focus on "bodies," not "the body." "They," not "it," are "mediated" and "hybrid"; "they" are constituted by, and constitutive of, political economic formations, whether colonialism, post-socialism, late capitalism or neoliberalism.

The second insight is that bodies cannot be divorced from their lived experiences, requiring a focus on embodiment: a way of inhabiting the world as well as the source of personhood, self, and subjectivity, and the precondition of intersubjectivity (see Van Wolputte 2004: 259). A focus on embodiment marks an epistemological, indeed a paradigmatic, shift within "the anthropology of the body" whose significance to contemporary research is reflected not only in the title of this *Companion* but also in the number of chapters in this volume focused on it: everything from personhood, gender, race, pain, masculinity, and impairment to forms of creativity, legacies of genocide, aesthetics, transnationalism, neoliberalism, avatars, bioethics, and "camp" are enlivened by being understood as embodiments. The shift to embodiment has required a change in how anthropologists research and write about bodies. Although the best work in anthropology has always had strong ethnographic content, it is nearly impossible today to theorize or generalize about embodiment without mining rich ethnographic details and writing vivid descriptions. The chapters in this volume thus not only represent the main concerns in anthropology today on topics related to bodies and embodiment but also illustrate the deep intertwining of "theory" and "data" that has come to characterize the field. Since the 1990s, the emphasis on embodiment has been accompanied by, and intersected with, another significant insight, which appears across many chapters as well: that the senses, emotions, and affect are the essence of our embodied materialities and socialities.

The bodies in this volume are deeply "sited"; that is, they are grounded in actual worlds. The bodies in some of the chapters stay put in particular geographic locales; in other chapters they move, whether patients or corpses, across international boundaries. A number reside in scientific labs and medical clinics, others in the more ephemeral space of the scientific imagination and cyberworlds, reflecting the ever-increasing recognition of the necessity of examining the cultural and political contexts of the production of scientific, technological, and medical knowledge, expertise, and authority for understanding the lived body today. New theoretical frameworks and agendas are offered in this volume, as are fresh conceptual categories. The hope is that as a compendium of the most current research being undertaken today, the *Companion* will offer readers not only fresh ideas and insights about bodies and embodiments but also guideposts for launching future research agendas.

## REFERENCES

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy and Margaret M. Lock, 1987 The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 1(1): 6–41.

Van Wolputte, Steven, 2004 Hang on to Your Self: Of Bodies, Embodiment, and Selves. Annual Review of Anthropology 33: 251–269.

CHAPTER 1

# AESTHETICS
## *Aesthetic Embodiment and Commodity Capitalism*

*Frances E. Mascia-Lees*

"Aesthetics was born as a discourse of the body"

(Terry Eagleton 1991: 13)

### Aestheticization of Everyday Life

The "aesthetic" is a slippery term, with a complicated history in Western philosophy. In the eighteenth century, Alexander Baumgarten (1714–1762) appropriated it from the Greek *aisthētikós*, meaning "perceptive by feeling," for the name of his new science of sense experience. However, not long after, and due to the complex socioeconomic and political context in which the discourse of the aesthetic was deployed, Kant (1724–1804) transformed it to mean almost its opposite: a disinterested, distanced, contemplative, and objectifying act of consciousness (see Buck-Morss 1992 and Eagleton 1991). Thus, although "aesthetics was born as a discourse of the body" (Eagleton 1991: 13), referring to corporeal, material nature (Buck-Morss 1992: 6), it transmuted quickly, coming to be a term applied to the rational act of good judgment (i.e. taste) about art and the beauties of nature, and ultimately to a theory of art and beauty. In this conceptualization, art is understood as an autonomous realm of human endeavor separate from social, political, and economic constraints. It is the Kantian notion of the aesthetic as autonomous, removed from normal needs and desires, that has been under critique in the academy for three

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

decades.[1] Critics argue that this construction renders aesthetic experience transcendent, universal, acultural, and ahistorical, when it is actually a handmaiden of privilege masking political interests. Bourdieu (1984) famously critiqued Kant's conceptualization, exposing his notion of aesthetic appreciation as a form of cultural capital that constructs class identity and maintains class privilege through distinctions in "taste."[2]

The aesthetic has also been of central concern to critical theory. In his analysis of aesthetic theory in *Marxism and Literature*, Raymond Williams suggests why: he identifies it, along with "the psychological," as among "the two great modern ideological systems" of the West (Williams 1978: 129). He, like Bourdieu, critiques the idea of the aesthetic as an autonomous realm, independent of the economic, social, and political. For Williams, this problematically renders the aesthetic asocial, and, in the process, allows the "social" to be constructed in opposition as a fixed form, rather than experiential process (1978: 133).[3] Williams, also warns about another characteristic of the aesthetic under conditions of commodity capitalism: its ability to blunt class-consciousness and revolutionary action through "the dulling, the lulling, the chiming, the overbearing" of its methods and content-matter (1978: 155–156). With this, Williams joined other cultural Marxists in contesting Kant's disembodying of the aesthetic, re-embodying it and returning to its original meaning of sense perception.

It is the danger of the numbing effects of consumer capitalism on the human senses that interests me in this chapter. The impact of the proliferation of commodities on the modern subject was, of course, one of Walter Benjamin's (1968) central insights. Benjamin was concerned with the phantasmagoric nature of commodity forms, which deceives the senses through an appearance of reality produced by technological manipulation. He warned of the shallow "aestheticization of everyday life" resulting from this mediation of reality, which disconnects the spectacles of modernity from the political and social trends buttressing them. Drawing on Freud, he argued that to protect the individual from the perceptual shocks of the modern world – produced not only by new technologies of representation and reproduction, but also a profusion of objects in the arcades, industrial production in the factory, and crowds in the street – consciousness must act as a shield, staving off the trauma of excessive stimuli by stopping their penetration deep enough into memory to leave a permanent trace (Benjamin 1968: 242; Buck-Morss 1992). Susan Buck-Morss suggests that this protective mechanism initiated a "crisis in perception" in which the role of the perceptual system was reversed; rather than opening the modern subject to the world and enabling experience, she argues, its goal became *an*esthetic: to numb the organism and deaden the senses (1992: 16–18). The consequences for the modern subject were dire: "[this] dialectical reversal, whereby aesthetics changes from a cognitive mode of being 'in touch' with reality to a way of blocking out reality, destroys the human organism's power to respond politically even when self-preservation is at stake" (Buck-Morss 1992: 18).

Buck-Morss argues that the deadening of this political response is required by capitalism to produce passive consumers. It was accomplished primarily through an overstimulation produced by manipulating environmental stimuli to control the body's sensual system (1992: 22).

Theodore Adorno's and Max Horkheimer's (1979) now classic condemnation of the "culture industry" presents just such an argument: repeated exposure to commodified,

mass-mediated entertainment activates and stimulates the senses in order to dull them, undermining the possibility of revolutionary action. However, for them, critical resistance could still emanate from the autonomous realm of "high art." In this contention, Horkheimer and Adorno differ from Walter Benjamin, who famously argued in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (Benjamin 1968) that new technologies of cultural production, such as the camera, *might* have democratizing and libratory potential and that non-auratic art might even undo the alienation of the corporeal sensorium and lead to new forms of collective politics.

By the 1980s, the concern with the stupefying effects of commodity culture became fundamental to a Marxist cultural theory focused on understanding late capitalism. The theorization of the aesthetic was at the heart of this project. Theorists such as Jean Baudrillard (1983), Mike Featherstone (1991), and Fredric Jameson (1984) were centrally concerned with the working out of the changing relationship of the cultural to the economic, and particularly, the aesthetic to commodification. Everything, from the possibility of political change and moral certitude, the nature of consciousness and of the unconscious, the significance and value of art and of everyday experience, the character of subjectivity and identity, and the meaning of the body and libidinal desire, was at stake in these discussions (Mascia-Lees and Sharpe 2000).

Echoing Benjamin, but absent his ambivalence toward the aesthetic as at once problematic and a possible realm of liberation, these critics conceived the cultural conditions of late capitalism as an age in which the complete integration of cultural production into commodity production rendered everyday life thoroughly aestheticized (Featherstone 1991; Jameson 1984). They argued that processes that had begun to emerge in modernity under industrial capitalism were completed in postmodernity under late capitalism: the boundary between art and everyday life and the real and the image was fully collapsed, as was the distinction between high art and mass / popular culture and between taste cultures (Featherstone 1991: 65). If Adorno and Horkheimer continued to validate "high art" as an autonomous realm and site of resistance, and Benjamin found political possibility in modernity's new media technologies, these theorists occluded any possibility of a critical position, rendering late capitalist subjects completely impotent. The rapid flow of images that came to saturate everyday life produced, they claimed, sensory overload, a waning of affect, and a loss of a sense of depth and history (Jameson 1984), a culture of superficiality (Featherstone 1991: 66), and a world of the simulacrum in which commodities bear no relationship to their materiality but are merely floating signifiers in an arbitrary sign system of taste and lifestyle (Baudrillard 1983).

A major drawback in much of this work is the assumption, rather than demonstration, of a particular experience of commodification and its effects on the human body in the actual everyday life of consumers. Too often, public forms of cultural production – literary, architectural, or otherwise – are read as expressions of the sensory condition of the contemporary subject, whether affectless, anaesthetized, overloaded or, for that matter, endlessly desirous. The exemplar of this approach is Fredric Jameson's well-known reading of Los Angeles's Bonaventure Hotel as a disorienting aesthetic space that "transcends the capacities of the individual human body to locate itself, to organize its immediate surroundings perceptually, and cognitively to map its position in a mappable external world" (Jameson 1984: 83). This dazed and confused consumer is, in turn, understood by Jameson as a symbol of an "even sharper dilemma"

for the subjects of late capitalism: their incapacity "to map the great global multinational and decentered communicational network" in which they are caught (Jameson 1984: 84).

In the last two decades, anthropology has witnessed burgeoning interest in the senses, investigating how meanings are invested in, and conveyed through, the senses in different cultural contexts (Classen 1997: 405). David Howes (2005) has been at the forefront of exploring the sensory logic of late capitalism. In his "material history of the senses" under capitalism, Howes argues that everyday life today has become "hyperaestheticized" through commodity aesthetics, the inclusion of an aesthetic dimension into products through the enhancement of surface appearance (Howes 2005, see Haug 1986). Contemporary consumers are no longer "confined to the projection of dream worlds of consumer gratification," Howes suggests; now all the senses are "massaged" as manufacturers, designers, and advertisers differentiate their products in vying to pique consumer desire and increase market share (2005: 248 and 281–303). Howes argues that this project of instrumentalizing the senses comes at a price to capitalism itself (2005: 248):

> Multiplying the sensory stimuli emitted by the merchandise and designing for affectivity (i.e. pleasure with products) was bound to undermine the very instrumentality, the very rationality of the system whose ends it was supposed to serve. The hyperaestheticization of the body of the commodity has deconstructed its utility. With utility now in recession, a space has opened up where people can "make sense" of things in all sorts of non-commercial, "non-rational," ways such as using Lifebuoy soap to give a sheen to one's skin, or deploying Kool-Aid as a hair dye (2005: 298).

Although he suggests this "deinstrumentalization" might open up possibilities for consumers to reclaim the sensual, Howes pulls back from this conclusion, suggesting that it is unlikely that "the sensory profusion" of contemporary consumer culture has "let the consumer out of the glove" (2005: 298). But are there other sites to which we might turn to uncover how members of consumer society today, "value, relate and combine the senses in everyday life" (Howes, this volume, chapter 15)?

In this chapter, I seek to further Howes's aim of writing a material history of the senses in commodity culture by focusing on the everyday lives of actual subjects: a group of U.S. consumers who self-consciously consume products associated with the widespread late 19th- and early 20th-century Arts and Crafts Movement, an artistic, philosophical, and socialist movement that arose in opposition to industrial capitalism and had as its expressed goal "making the everyday beautiful." My ethnographic investigation shows that outside the realm of commodity aesthetics, mass-mediated entertainment, and the rapid flow of signs and images that permeate consumer culture, there are realms of contemporary life in which the human sensorium is enlivened, rather than deadened. In order to find them, however, we need not only shift location but also our standard conceptualizations about the relationship of the aesthetic to the senses under commodity capitalism. I suggest such a refiguring by treating the aesthetic as Merleau-Ponty does: a way of embodied knowing, a way through which "humans respond to forms, shapes, and color," and to light, lighting, shadows, and reflections "in ways that take on a life of their own and open themselves up to metaphoric meaning" (Merleau-Ponty 1964: 123). New insights emerge if we approach the aesthetic as a form of embodiment, a way of being-in-the-world.

## Aesthetic Embodiment

To focus attention on this Merleau-Pontian conceptualization of the aesthetic and to differentiate it from other modes of embodiment, I use the concept "aesthetic embodiment." Although all aesthetic experiences are embodied, not all embodied experiences are aesthetic; thus invoking "embodiment" alone does not signal the particular nature of the experiences I seek to understand. Employing "aesthetic embodiment" also helps to clarify the meaning and use of the word "aesthetic." In this chapter, for example, I am concerned with the Arts and Crafts aesthetic both as a style and as the form of embodiment it constitutes. I explore aesthetic embodiment as a somatically-grounded, culturally mediated, affective encounter with the beautiful (see Berleant 2004). I focus on the beautiful because it has significant ethnographic salience for the Arts and Crafts population with which I work. I am interested in asking whether Arts and Crafts aestheticizes life in the ways cultural Marxists would predict. To address this issue, it is first necessary to explore why, among consumers for whom the Arts and Crafts aesthetic operates as a meaningful category, certain commodities come to be seen as beautiful and how this form of beauty constitutes a significant dimension of their lived experience. What role does beauty – its creation, presence, and assessment – play in the fabric of their experiences of everyday life?

As a larger research agenda, focusing on different dimensions of "aesthetic embodiment" should reveal significant insights about how the aesthetic constitutes a lived world. E. Valentine Daniel's 1994 comparison of beauty and pain as aesthetic experiences in "The Individual in Terror" is particularly instructive. Focusing specifically on the relationship of beauty and pain to language, he argues that both are "concerned with the sensory … with throbbing precepts that push against the conceptual membrane that encloses the world of active semiosis of articulate speech" (Daniel 1994: 233). Pain and beauty are also similar in that both put "language on trial;" but they do so in different ways: "beauty finds language wanting because of beauty's profound inexhaustibility; pain finds language wanting in pain's excruciating particularity" (Daniel 1994: 233). Beauty's "mode of signification is found in iconic signs – in metaphors and in objects that partake of beauty's qualities." Thus beauty's objectification is "generous," "opening out to the world, inviting further signs, objects, and interpretants;" pain, by contrast "closes in on itself;" it finds "affirmation not in its extension but intensification" (Daniel 1994: 233).

If aesthetic embodiment constitutes particular ways of being in world, then "style," according to Merleau-Ponty, is a way of inhabiting it, a coherent orientation toward the world and a way of expressively appropriating it (see Singer 1993). Here, "style" is not meant in its more colloquial sense as a veneer over things that can be extracted and identified on its own, but instead, "a way to characterize the persistence and characteristic manner of appearance that we recognize in other things without having to constitute them explicitly" (Singer 1993: 234). This manifestation is greater than surface appearance alone. Rather than being something distinctive to be discerned, style is the characteristic of a thing that elicits a perceptual and implied motor response in which both perceived and perceiver are joined in the style of intercourse from which their identity emerges (Singer 1993: 234). Style is, in this sense, experiential

and inextricably connected to an object's particular materiality, as Vivian Sobchack's description vividly captures:

> Style is... the thread running through all the properties of the thing and in a person's interaction with that thing... The glasslike feel, brittleness, tinkling sound [of a drinking glass] and such have an accent, an atmosphere, that also encompasses the over-glass-sliding movement-of-the-finger or the bent-shooting-out-finger-striking-tinkling-evoking-flick movement of the hand (quoted in Barker 2009: 3).

Arts and Crafts today can, of course, be understood as a style in the vernacular sense: many consumers identify it by a set of external characteristics and appreciate it for that appearance. However, it is not with these consumers that I am centrally concerned in this chapter, but those for whom Arts and Crafts style provides a coherent orientation to the world. These are consumers for whom affect and intellect come together in an aesthetic sensibility that produces a particular "somatic mode of attention" (Csordas 1993).

The original Arts and Crafts Movement, as I discuss in more detail below, was grounded in Marxist principles, which tied the political to the aesthetic by locating beauty in non-alienated labor; celebrating equality, community, and immersion in the details of daily life; and linking respect for others with an aesthetic sensibility. For many producers and consumers of Arts and Crafts today, "beauty" is an expression of an aesthetic philosophy embedded in these political and ethical commitments. The aesthetic embodiment of Arts and Crafts, for them, is a full experience in which beauty resides neither in the object nor the eye of the beholder, but is constituted through experiences connecting mind, body, individuals, and community. Just as the Japanese tea ceremony, described by Dorinne Kondo, can be understood as a confluence of religious and philosophical beliefs with an aesthetic that locates beauty in the mundane (Kondo 2005: 192–211), so too can Arts and Crafts be seen as a complex ethical-philosophical-style nexus, with beauty sited in the everyday. However, while the beliefs of the tea ceremony are "given life" through ritual enactment with transcendence as its goal, the Arts and Crafts aesthetic, as we will see, is an intersubjective "lived" experience of immersion in the everyday. For the consumers who are the focus of this chapter, the Arts and Crafts aesthetic is thus more akin to what Robert Dejerlais has called an "aesthetics of everyday life," a particular form of the embodied values that govern how they go about their daily lives (Desjerlais 1992: 14).

The complexity of this nexus makes the Arts and Crafts aesthetic a rich site for understanding it as a form of embodiment and style. But the Arts and Crafts Movement is fascinating for another reason: its philosophical tenets are implicated in the very discourse of theorists of the "aestheticization of everyday life" such as Benjamin. He, like other cultural Marxists, was influenced by the ideas of the founder of the Arts and Crafts Movement, William Morris (1834–1896), a pioneer and leader of revolutionary socialism in Britain at the end of the 19th century. For example, Morris's claim for the uniqueness of art objects against the mechanical fragmentation of aesthetic experience provides the foundations for Benjamin's later aesthetic critiques (King 2008), while Morris's articulation of pleasure, desire, beauty, and socialism resurfaces in theorists within Western Marxism, such as Guy Debord (McDonald 2006). Thus, Morris's ideas are important not only for understanding contemporary Arts and Crafts consumers, but also some of the fundamental ideas of cultural Marxism that have

framed "aestheticization of everyday life" arguments. Starting with Morris, rather than, for example, Adorno, alerts us to an alternative way of thinking about the relationship of the senses to consumer capitalism.

## The U.S. Arts and Crafts Revival

Although the popularity of the original Arts and Crafts Movement both in Britain (c. 1880–1910) and the United States (c. 1895–1913) was vast at the turn of the 20th century, with World War I it fell from favor as consumer demand for household commodities declined. By the 1930s, designs by William Morris and other Arts and Crafts artists became rarefied, available only to connoisseurs. And yet 50 years later, in the 1970s in the United States, the Arts and Crafts Movement experienced a renaissance now spanning over four decades, making the current revival more than twice as long-lasting as the original impulse. Today the Movement and the appeal of its aesthetic is immense: a dizzying array of Arts and Crafts objects can be purchased and the aesthetic can be explored at conferences and art shows and in museums, at a range of tourist sites, and through scores of popular magazines, books, and websites devoted to it. However, although the original Arts and Crafts Movement has been explored in hundreds of books, academic journals, and conferences, with new work published monthly in such fields as material studies, design history, and cultural science studies, the revival goes largely unexplored and unexplained. Popular magazines and coffee table books showcase it but little, if any, serious scholarly work has been conducted, whether in cultural studies, consumer studies, sociology, or anthropology.

The roots of the U.S. Arts and Crafts Revival are not well documented, but it appears to have been initiated in 1966 with a book by John Crosby Freeman entitled *The Forgotten Rebel: Gustav Stickley and his Craftsman Mission Furniture*, focused on the founder of the Arts and Crafts Movement in the United States. Stickley imported Morris's ideas and published them widely in his periodical, *The Craftsman*. But it was not until the early 1970s that the rediscovery of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic began to clearly emerge in response to two exhibits mounted in 1972: Princeton University's "The Arts and Crafts Movement in America" and the Pasadena Art Museum's "California Design 1910 Exhibition." Two years later one of the original Stickley companies in upstate New York was bought and began to reproduce original designs. Early consumers were primarily collectors with significant purchasing power, although less wealthy buyers sought objects that were affordably priced (http://www.craftsmanhome.com/news/2006/index.html, accessed May 11, 2009). As antique items became increasingly scarce and expensive in the 1990s, a few craftspeople began to reproduce earlier designs while many more began to produce original work that interpreted the vocabulary and philosophy of the original Movement, often creating fresh, contemporary designs (Ewald 1999: 8), even as traditions are venerated: Arts and Crafts artisans are extremely knowledgeable about their predecessors, educated in both their philosophy and techniques (Ewald 1999: xii and 15). Aided by the Internet, the sale of handmade crafts has expanded significantly in the last decade.

The revival of the U.S. Arts and Crafts Movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s is coincident with the emergence of a post-Fordist economy and the development of the "postmodern culture" theorized and critiqued by "aestheticization of everyday

life" theorists. There is no doubt that the revival is part of this larger context in which culture became a primary site of identity creation and commodity culture a primary source for the raw materials for constructing notions of self. At the same time, the Arts and Crafts Revival was a reaction against the exploding consumerism and heightened sensory overstimulation of the period, and like many craft revival movements, it turned to an idea of a simpler past as site of amelioration. The desire to look back was also, of course, part and parcel of this moment in which authenticity, the past, and tradition were on sale everywhere, for example, at tourist sites, museum shops, and theme parks. The revival is thus deeply embedded in consumer capitalism. This, I suggest, makes it a particularly interesting site for assessing the relationship between late capitalism and the senses. As I will suggest, it is not sensory overload that results from beautifying the everyday, but its opposite: it increases sensitivity to everyday life.

This chapter is based on fieldwork conducted over a two-year period among a particular segment of the Arts and Crafts Revival: people who attend the annual Grove Park Inn (GPI) Arts and Crafts Conference in Ashville, North Carolina to both study the Arts and Crafts Movement and to purchase handcrafted objects for their homes from skilled craftspeople. Each year thousands of Arts and Crafts consumers – mostly white and educated – travel to the GPI Conference. As with most craft consumers in the United States, the majority of attendees are middle class, and more specifically, middle-middle class. Over 1,300 people registered for the 2010 conference while another 3,000 came as walk-ins, mostly individuals living within three to four hours driving distance from Ashville. However, registered attendees came from all over, including outside of the United States, but tended to be from the mid-West, upstate New York, and, to a lesser extent, the West.

Established in the 1980s, the GPI Arts and Crafts Conference is the most important event of the year for Arts and Crafts enthusiasts. The conference is an interesting hybrid, combining lectures, small group discussions, and an artisan craft show with as many as 125 exhibitors. The conference format underscores the centrality of intellectual pursuit as an appeal of Arts and Crafts consumption. Indeed, for some individuals, the Arts and Craft aesthetic has become meaningful only through study. The attendees with whom I work – both craftspeople and consumers – are not only conversant with the history of the Arts and Crafts Movement, especially the ideas of William Morris and Gustav Stickley, to which I turn in the next section, but are also nothing less than passionate about it, eclectically merging ideas from both the British and U.S. Movements into their craft designs and consumer choices.

The importance of education for Arts and Crafts consumers could be taken to support Bourdieu's claim that aesthetic consumption is really about cultural capital; some Arts and Crafts consumers certainly gain status and prestige based on their knowledge of a "tasteful" aesthetic. This is especially so for collectors of rare and antique pieces, but less significant for middle-class consumers. Knowledge of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic as a source of symbolic capital is compromised somewhat for these consumers: although the style is widespread, it is not part of mainstream understandings of art and beauty, making it at best an ambiguous signifier of taste and class. Indeed, consumers who attend the Grove Park Inn Conference note that the majority of people they know have very little understanding of what the Arts and Crafts aesthetic is "really about." As one attendee put it, "my friends think it involves making potholders or containers out of Popsicle sticks."

Individuals who attend the conference come not only to be educated but also to view and buy items for their home and to socialize with other Arts and Crafts enthusiasts, whether consumer, educator, or craftsperson. What is particularly significant to consumers at the GPI Arts and Crafts Conference is that it is a place where they can not only learn more about Arts and Crafts from seminars and lectures, but buy handicrafts directly from the very craftspeople who make them.

## The Ideology of an Aesthetic

The original Arts and Crafts Movement began in Britain as a reaction against modernity and the excesses of Victorian society. It was driven by the desire to improve the working conditions of the working class (Kaplan 2004: 11) and to secure the value of skilled craftsmanship in an age dominated by machines (see Owen 2004). Adherents criticized the mass production of material goods, which they saw as resulting in cheap, poorly made and tasteless commodities. William Morris, the leader of the Movement, is considered by some to be one of the greatest revolutionary figures in British labor history. But Morris was not only a socialist activist: he was also a poet, novelist, bibliophile, translator, and architectural preservationist. He designed and made furniture, textiles, stained glass, tiles, carpets, murals, wallpapers, books, type, and more. According to his biographer E.P. Thompson, Morris was the "first creative artist of major stature in the world to take his political stand, consciously and without shadow of compromise, with the revolutionary working class" (Thompson 1955 [1976]: 727). Andrew Hemingway argues that it was Morris's very "vocational location in the art world that gave him a particular opportunity to articulate ... the aesthetic positions that could be said to be inherent in Marxist Theory" (2006: 17).

What linked Morris's socialism to his aesthetic principles was his conceptualization of work as naturally pleasurable and beautiful if carried out under the right conditions, evidenced in the Arts and Crafts Movement slogan, "Joy in Labor." Morris was the first social thinker to apply the Marxist theory of labor to art, drawing on Marx's dictum that the free and unrestricted exercise of the labor process is manifest in creation "in accordance with the laws of beauty" (Arscott 2006: 9). For Marx, art mediates between the senses and the intellect, between cognition and feeling and is a means to transcend the present and transform the dormant into the actual (Solomon 1979: 82). Recognizing the transcendent and revolutionary potential of Marx's aesthetic dialectics, Morris envisioned a non-repressive social order founded on the reintroduction of the aesthetic into the labor process (Solomon 1979: 79). For Morris, all work done with pleasure is art; as he put it, "real art is the expression by man of his pleasure in labor." By situating beauty in labor, Morris expanded the category of the aesthetic and radically redefined it.

Combining Marxist ideas with those of art critic John Ruskin, Morris proposed that bringing beauty into the lives of people of all classes could counter the ills of modernity. Like Ruskin, Morris extolled the virtues of handicraft, turning to craftsmanship as a site from which to reunite what industrial capitalism had torn asunder: art and labor, mental effort and manual achievement, and work and play (Owen 2004: 25–26). Because Morris followed Ruskin, who valorized the medieval past, his turn to that period for a model of production has been seen by some critics as part

of the 19th-century Romantic Movement that condemned industrial society and sought a return to nature and the past as solution. However, Morris himself viewed the Romantics as wallowing in nostalgia; he turned to the medieval past for artistic inspiration, deploying it to critique present conditions under industrial capitalism (Ward 2009). He and his followers were neither anti-industrial nor anti-modern, accepting the use of machinery as long as craft workers were not exploited and the quality of the output was high (Kaplan 2004: 11).

Morris and his followers sought to eliminate the hierarchical boundary between high art and craft, seeking to change the status of the decorative arts from "trade" to that of art (Crawford 2004: 23). The Movement's name reflected this commitment: it was coined in 1887 by a group of British designers who founded the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society as a place where applied art would be equally valued with "fine" art (Crawford 2004: 36). Concerned specifically with the decorative arts and with craft production within the domestic sphere, the Arts and Crafts Movement sought to break down the Victorian separation of the public and the private, the factory and the home, the workplace and the family (Mascia-Lees and Sharpe 2000). Movement leaders spread their philosophy through public lectures and political writing, while, at the same time, putting theory into practice through a range of political projects: for example, they found employment for the impoverished, fought for improved working conditions for the working classes, and developed institutions to train unskilled and increasingly deskilled workers in craft production, many of them immigrants and women who swelled the ranks of the poor (Kaplan 2004: 17). The Arts and Crafts Movement also established numerous guilds and art societies that produced hand-crafted products, some of which were dominated by men, but others that not only employed women but were also exclusively female-based.

Morris consistently identified daily life as the domain in which beauty, pleasure, and happiness could be freely available to all and believed that the everyday is the measure of everything (Perkins 2010: 30), constructing which Peter Stansky (1999) has called an ideology of "the radical domestic."[4] Because everyday life, for Morris, was the site of sensory, embodied experiences and the domain of work, he contended it was "meaningless to consider revolutionary change in class relations, the means of production, or the distribution of wealth without taking this into account": if work was not "part of the pleasure of our lives" then the revolution would remain incomplete (Perkins 2010: 3–4). Beyond the realm of work, Morris argued for paying attention to, and taking a pleasurable interest in, the details of daily life, which included an awareness of everyday objects and places, an aspect that Morris emphasized in his essays on design, architecture, and interior decoration (Perkins 2010). The "true secret of happiness," he argued "*lies in the taking a genuine interest in all the details of daily life*" (Morris 1887: 94, emphasis in the original).

Morris's call for a special kind of attention to the everyday was a response to the phenomenological problems endemic to modernity and the capitalist mode of production described by "aestheticization of the everyday life" theorists such as the acceleration of life, alienation from the body, and the deadening processes of everyday, monotonous routine. Against this, Morris called for attention to, and interest in, mundane details and the familiar, whether in work or home decoration (Perkins 2010: 6). For him, everyday encounters with material spaces and objects always have an affective potential with power to "express the kind of life which [we] live" (quoted in

Perkins 2010: 8) and, as Perkins points out, to spark a desire for a different kind of life (2010: 8). Because everyday life is indissolubly connected to material objects that furnish daily life, Morris also argued that the decorative arts connect people to a past, calling attention to "every step to that history of which ... they are so great a part." (quoted in Perkins 2010: 9, 40). It is interesting to note here Benjamin's (1999) disagreement on this point: he argues that the idea of "the interior" as a space of refuge and the domestic object as site of holding tradition is itself a consequence of the distinction between public and private produced under industrial capitalism. For him, this emergence is related to the misplaced belief that the immateriality of proverbs and stories in an earlier time can be provided by material substitutes (see Benjamin and Rice 2009). Nonetheless, Morris's call to "beautify the familiar" was linked to his "radical belief in a profound transformation of everyday life that would free work from alienation and institute equitable and pleasurable forms of social life" (Perkins 2010: 18). Yet, Morris was no naive socialist; he warned against faith in partial reforms. He argued that the transformation of social conditions required nothing less than a takeover by open revolution of all the means of production.[5]

What was important to the Arts and Crafts Movement, then, was not merely or even primarily the particular look of an object but the mode in which it was crafted, the sensuous and intellectual labor that went into making it, and its integration into the everyday life of all classes (Crawford 2004: 59). The Arts and Crafts aesthetic is therefore better understood as an approach to the making and dissemination of objects based on socialist principles than as a unified style based on specific design principles (Kaplan 2004: 11).

This does not mean that there were no shared design ideals within the Arts and Crafts Movement: indeed it is the reciprocal mapping of political commitments onto shapes and forms that constitutes the Arts and Crafts aesthetic. Arts and Crafts objects were distinguished by their individuality and qualities associated with the Movement's philosophy that arose in response to the decorative excesses and cheap quality of Victorian mass-produced goods. These design ideals reached their height in the U.S. Arts and Crafts Movement through the ideas, designs, and products of Gustav Stickley: solidity in construction, simplicity, honesty to materials, and fidelity to place, the latter based on a respect for local traditions (Crawford 2004: 59–61).[6] Functionality and utility were key to the Arts and Crafts ideal as well. Consequently, Arts and Crafts manufacturers and craftspeople using a simple design and natural, high-quality materials produced virtually every item used in daily life. Although Morris did not reject the machine as long as it did not rule labor, Stickley actively embraced it. His intent was to change the conditions of industrial work, using the machine to better the lives of all people. He, thus, used factory methods to produce basic components and utilized craftspeople to finish and assemble the product. Because of this, he, more than Morris, was able to keep prices low and bring the reform aesthetic of the Arts and Crafts Movement to the middle and working classes, thus fulfilling more fully the "design for the masses" ideology in the United States than in Britain.

In line with Morris's "radical domesticity," Stickley advocated the democratization of design, and campaigned for houses that would give the working class as much respectability as the wealthy (Winter and Vertikoff: 1996: 18). He argued that "the root of all reform lies in the individual and that the life of the individual is shaped mainly by home surroundings" (Stickley 1909). In the United States during this period, a range of social reformers with a commitment to social justice sought change

by way of housing: social workers, labor unionists, feminist, architects, and artisans all called for "a beautiful home with a beautiful heart"[7] at the same time that elected officials introduced policies encouraging home ownership to increase the political and economic stability of the nation (Maddex and Vertikoff 2003: 12). This commitment to the home led Stickley to design not only relatively inexpensive furniture, but affordable houses as well. Consequently, in the United States, the Arts and Crafts aesthetic is associated historically not only with the democratization of consumption, but also with the "American Dream" and the growth of the suburbs.

Stickley's "Craftsmen homes," as they were called, were to a large extent modeled on the bungalow, originally an Anglo-Indian construction used for summer housing. By definition simple homes designed for living, bungalows lent themselves well to the ideals of Stickley and other Arts and Crafts architects and builders. They were designed to create an interior space consistent with living a life of the Arts and Crafts ideals of "honesty, simplicity, and usefulness." The exterior exhibited design elements consistent with the Arts and Crafts philosophy as well, as Stickley's description of the bungalow as ideal house-type suggests. The bungalow, he says,

> never fails to harmonize with its surroundings because its low, broad proportions and absolute lack of ornamentation give it a character so natural and unaffected that it seems to blend with any landscape. It is beautiful because it is planned and built to meet simple needs in the simplest and most direct way (http: / / www.fine-woodworking-for-your-home. com / artsandcraftsstyle.html, accessed November 20, 2010).

From the turn of the century until the 1930s, bungalows were the preferred house type in the United States, especially among the working class. As families increasingly sought the American Dream, bungalows were built by the hundreds of thousands and were constructed through multiple means reflecting their cross-class appeal: some were expensive and architect-designed homes, others were built from plans found in catalogs of house designs (planbooks), and others were prefabricated, constructed as "kit" houses and sold by such merchandisers as Sears Roebuck. They also had cross-gender appeal. Although U.S. notions of home have long been deeply gendered (see DiLeonardo 2004: 135–151), both men and women were central to the Arts and Crafts Movement, attracting male interest in the structure, contents, and interior design of homes while, at the same time, providing women with professional opportunities, many of whom overcame gender obstacles to found businesses, invent technology, and build economic markets (see Zipf 2007).[8] Today, many Arts and Crafts adherents, both women and men, own bungalows, which they have often painstakingly restored to their original Arts and Crafts condition.

## The Ethnography of an Aesthetic

> *"Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful."*
> (William Morris 1880: 76)

"Beautiful" is the key word used by GPI Arts and Crafts Conference producers and consumers to describe Arts and Crafts objects. This notion of beauty is grounded in Movement ideas about the relationship of beauty to labor and social justice.

Because form, function, political ideas, and ethical commitments are imbricated in this notion of beauty, it is not possible to extract any simple idea of "the beautiful" related only to the materiality of an Arts and Crafts object. A human rights attorney at the GPI Conference voiced this clearly: "the politics is central; beauty is in the philosophy of non-exploitation." Indeed, for some consumers, the explicit purpose of attending the GPI Conference is the opportunity it affords them to buy products directly from the person who makes them, thus participating in an exchange they see as non-exploitative and circumventing the depersonalized sphere of consumer capitalism, at least is some aspects of their life.

When asked to characterize a particular object's sensual and physical appeal, consumers use a range of qualities, including visual form, tactile sensation, weight, balance, and dimensionality: for example, they have identified the solidity of a bookcase, the smooth feeling of the matte surface of a vase, the texture and concreteness of a ceramic tile, the exquisite handwork of an embroidered table runner, the durability of a table, the erectness of the straight lines of a chair, and the radiant ray flakes of a quarter-sawn oak buffet. Because Arts and Crafts objects are, for the most part, domestic items to be used not merely displayed, it is not surprising that the haptic[9] senses figure so centrally in these descriptions along with the visual. Fisher (1997) notes the significance of haptic engagement with an object: "The haptic sense, comprising the tactile, kinaesthetic and proprioceptive senses ... renders the surfaces of the body porous, being perceived at once inside, on the skin's surface, and in external space" (http://www.david-howes.com/senses/Fisher.htm, accessed November 1, 2010).

Because for GPI consumers, the haptic senses are central, they are prevented from keeping "a distance from the subjective character of the experience" (Marks 2002: 211). As Classen (2005) points out, this tactile quality is a characteristic of textile handicrafts that are made for use, such as clothing, cushions, and carpets, which have traditionally been in the realm of women's work. Embroidery, a central handicraft of the Arts and Crafts Movement, adds a further tactile dimension to textiles, she suggests, by creating designs in relief (Classen 2005: 230). The physical contact and intimacy of the experience of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic through the haptic senses produces what Mădălina Diaconu has called an "aesthetic of immersion" (http://www.contempaesthetics.org/newvolume/pages/article.php?articleID=385, accessed November 1, 2009).

Interestingly, although touch has historically been contrasted with vision, which is associated with the male and distanced engagement, touch with the female and close engagement, some scholars have suggested that the haptic mode of apprehension need not be in direct opposition to the visual. As Deleuze and Guattari (2004) have argued, haptic space may be as much visual or auditory as tactile. Thus, the haptic and visual may slide into one another, producing a form of perception that recent film critics have recognized as "haptic visuality." This is elicited by intimate details that encourage a small, caressing gaze which, as Laura Marks (2002) suggests, is a characteristic of such crafts as weaving, embroidery, and decoration, each of which figures prominently in the Arts and Crafts tradition. It is also the defining characteristic of any page of Morris's illustrated *Chaucer*, or other publications from his Kelmscott Press,[10] or his and his colleagues' wallpaper designs, composed of crisp, abundant, and densely repeating patterns influenced by natural forms with no vague or indeterminate elements or lines.[11] This is an important dimension of my own experience of the

Arts and Crafts aesthetic. As I stand close to these objects with eyes scanning every detail, it feels as though I am touching them with my eyes.

For some GPI Conference attendees, the overall experience of beauty involves the faculty of interoception, the process through which we gain awareness of our own bodies and locate our own experiences. This is vivid in this description by a consumer who had a chance encounter with an Arts and Crafts object that moved her: "As I came around the corner, my body responded to a beautifully shaped vase whose being there I don't think I had even consciously registered. It seemed instantaneous and I felt an intense rush through my body. I felt off-kilter, almost stopped in my tracks as I just stood there and soaked it in."

This description is reminiscent of Elaine Scarry's generalized characterization of the experience of beauty: "beauty," she asserts, "quickens. It adrenalizes. It makes the heart beat faster. It makes life more vivid, animated, living, worth living" (1999: 24). Of course, not all Arts and Crafts lovers experience beauty this way, but the consumer's description of her engagement with the vase above suggests that some of these sensations are involved; it also suggests that her experience of an object of beauty is capable of drawing her into the world by decentering her. Sobchak (2004) suggests one possible implication: as her embodiment is extended in the moment in which her responses take place, before they are registered by conscious thought, she cedes her subjectivity to the object.[12]

The Arts and Crafts aesthetic is not simply about objects, but about practices of decorating and furnishing that construct interior spaces. Spatial experience is always embodied and multisensory, organized by vision, hearing, and the haptic senses, reflecting the bodily experiences of weight, mass, density, pressure, humidity, temperature, presences, and resonances. While preliminary "home tours" suggest how, within the spaces of their houses, Arts and Crafts consumers feel the dimensionality of the spatial context, the demands of the particular layout, the arrangement of furnishings on them, and the impact of ambience, more observational material is needed before a full analysis is possible. What is clear is that multiple elements combine to produce an "Arts and Crafts atmosphere," an overall feeling that is most often described by consumers as "soothing," "tranquil," "harmonious," or "warm": simple geometric lines; plain and unadorned surfaces; the sturdiness and solidity of the furniture; a preponderance of wood with deep, rich finishes; an emphasis on horizontal lines; the use of subdued earth tone colors; and a preference for soft lighting, produced by mica or stained glass shades. As one person put it, the "the best way I can describe my Arts and Crafts living room is that it has soothing simplicity."

To create interior spaces, Arts and Crafts consumers engage in the skillful process of constructing recognizable assemblages that are more than the sum of their parts (Watson and Shove 2008: 71). In answer to my question about the timing of the emergence of the Arts and Crafts Revival, one interviewee pointed to the appeal of creating a totality in the face of the fragmentation characteristic of life in the United States in the middle decades of the 20th century:

> The Arts and Crafts Revival was a response to the atomization of everyday life in the 1950s and 60s. To get women back into the home after World War II, they were offered convenience. Everything could be broken down into a task that there was an appliance for. And the trend in science was to know about the smallest parts of things. Arts and Crafts brought the whole back in.

Various consumers remarked on the careful choices and decisions entailed in purchasing, grouping, and arranging objects to create a space that produces and elicits qualities of the lived experience they desire, whether simplicity, orderliness, tranquility, centrality of family, or a combination. As Bruce Johnson, organizer of the GPI Conference, says of the assembling of his possessions:

> Our Arts and Crafts collection is a combination of refinished antiques, a few precious pieces with their original finish, a dining room table and a floor lamp I made in my workshop, and works by contemporary craftsfirms. I made a decision years ago that has since defined our collection: we could only buy those pieces we could actually use while raising two sons and several dogs and cats in, as it turns out, five different houses over the course of thirty years.

As some conference attendees attested, the conscious and deliberate juxtaposition and contiguity of objects enables a heightened awareness of their central values and of the everyday, which, for many of them, they suggest, helps counter the inattentiveness to the familiarity and routine of the domestic environment that characterizes daily life for many people in the United States today.

Taking a genuine interest in details, paying attention to the familiar, and looking at everyday objects differently are crucial dimensions of the Arts and Crafts philosophy that are clearly of real significance to consumers. That an immersion into the everyday lies at the center of the Arts and Crafts experience of beauty is clear in the following statements of GPI Conference attendees: one stated, "You don't just design a house and fill it with stuff. Art and design and day to day have to merge." Another describes the overall experience of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic this way: "We are able to touch and feel the stuff and embrace the philosophy even if we don't live it entirely. Today part of it is also about having a personal aesthetic; you can mix reproductions with originals, but *everything* has to be beautiful. It makes you be aware of every aspect of daily life."

Thus, for many of the people with whom I work, Arts and Crafts is an "aesthetic of attending," a way of living that immerses them in their surroundings, grounded in what Sobchack would describe as a "corporeal and affective adherence" to the objective world, one which expresses their desire to enfold objects (2004: 288). For these GPI attendees the desire to enfold objects and be enfolded by them is *multilayered* and stems from a combination of the nature of craftsmanship itself and the Arts and Crafts philosophy.

The making of a craft object involves a transformation of perception into objects, ideas, and practices and demands specialized knowledge of materials and their properties and a high degree of motor / muscle skills (Risatti 2007). At the height of their talents, skilled craftspeople are able to bring all this together performing in a way that is often described as "effortless." Their mind is necessarily engaged with intellectual, abstract, and conceptual problems concerning form and expression as their skilled "thinking hands" execute the objects physical construction (Risatti 2007: 191). As the craftspeople with whom I work attest, craftmaking is a process of mind and hand working seamlessly together; it is itself a phenomenological investigation, or as Merleau-Ponty might put it "a philosophical inquiry," one in which the laboring body of the craftsperson comprises his / her being-in-the-world (Merleau-Ponty 1964: 169).

During the creative process, the craftsperson is passionately devoted to the world's objectivity, experiencing, as Sobchack describes it, both "a *sensual* and *sensible* expansion" of one's subjectivity and "an enhanced awareness of what it means *to be material*" oneself (Sobchak 2004: 290, emphases in original). This complementary co-constitutive experience we have of ourselves and others as material objects is a corporeal form of engagement Sobchack calls "interobjectivity" (2004: 296). She suggests that it provides the material foundation of our aesthetic behavior: "it allows us to understand in a primordial way the general pervasion in existence of material sense-ability" (Sobchack 2004: 290).

Handicraft also constitutes a way of being in the world for GPI Arts and Crafts consumers that is predicated on connection, both phenomenological and social. Conference attendees explicitly trace the appeal of handcrafted work to the inextricable link of creator, object, and consumer. The physical processes left by craftspeople's hands in their "phenomenological investigation" provide consumers access to the embodied act of making, and seems to invest the object with a vitality capable of countering commodity fetish. Unlike the manufactured commodity, the craft object does not appear falsely as an active agent capable of commanding attention and determining desire, while, simultaneously, blinding the consumer to the suffering and exploitation actually embedded in the commodity's production (Bennett 2001). Indeed, Arts and Crafts artisans refer explicitly to their "joy in labor," reiterating the central philosophy of the Movement. As the motto on one craftsman's business card reads: "My life's work is also my life's passion." Thus, the Arts and Crafts object attracts attention precisely because the labor of the craftsperson is evident in it. It is not a de-socialized and singular material entity, a thing whose physical substance is purely self-contained; instead it is part of a nexus of relationships to both the social and material world (Cerni 2007: 3). When GPI Arts and Crafts consumers purchase a craft object and enfold it, they enfold the craftsperson whose body and subjectivity are already enfolded in the object. Their experience of the handicraft emerges from a process that is both interobjective and intersubjective (see Sobchack 2004).

The value of the relationship between producer and consumer has reciprocal appeal: many GPI consumers state that buying a product from its maker provides them with an alternative to buying mass-produced items, affording them an ethical position that allows them to navigate at least some aspects of consumer culture, even as they know they cannot escape it. It also offers them a defense against mass-produced anonymity and provides them with a way of being in the world that is embedded in humanistic values and human relations. It offers the producer an experience of non-alienated labor and it provides both consumer and producer with an experience of authenticity and intimacy. As one furniture maker put it, "I derive great pleasure from making something for someone else: it is very personal, very intimate, very satisfying."

Buying a handicraft is not only a way to resist mass production, but also to rein in its excesses. As Howard Risatti suggests, with the sheer quantity, quality, and size of mass-produced objects that exist today, "there is little to give an absolute perspective and value to things, to anchor them except their comparative size or price" (Risatti 2007: 200). This, he argues, can feel limitless and unsatisfying. But with a craft object, its scale, size, and shape are a reflection of the properties of materials as they can be worked by the hand and used by the body (Risatti 2007: 200). This is a significant component of the appeal of Arts and Craft objects for many GPI Conference consumers who seek to

"bring living down to livable range," a sentiment also expressed as a desire to "downsize" and create a home, rather than a show house, where "family comes to relax and enjoy." In this regard, the appeal of the Arts and Crafts philosophy to many GPI consumers today parallels its attractiveness to original movement adherents who opposed the excesses of cheap goods and mass production, as is evident in this statement made by Stickley in 1901:

> We need to straighten out our standards and to get rid of a lot of rubbish that we have accumulated along with our wealth and commercial supremacy. In many ways we have wasted and misused so many of our wonderful natural resources. All we really need is a change in our point of view toward life and a keener perception regarding the things that count and the things that really burden us (Quoted in Vesely 1986: 44).

A scaled-down life is a meaningful one for many Arts and Crafts consumers who connect their appreciation of the Arts and Crafts Movement and its aesthetic with an ethical commitment not just to non-exploitative labor but also to the larger world in which they live. This is reflected in many of their backgrounds as teachers, social workers, psychologists, and counselors. It is not unusual to find among GPI Conference participants individuals who have spent a good part of their life involved in what they feel is meaningful service, whether a human rights lawyer, a retired teacher who has spent a lifetime in schools in underprivileged areas, an older woman who recently "adopted" a 16-year-old ex-drug addict to give her "a second chance at life"; or a man who had come of age in the late 1960s when a return to nature, land, and working with one's hands was tied not only to a desire to escape rampant consumerism but also to a progressive politics to which he remains committed. For him, Arts and Crafts is a praxis and way of being that "transforms surroundings and builds community."

## Conclusion

The Arts and Crafts aesthetic is one that involves multiple sensory experiences and is simultaneously pre-reflective and highly self-reflexive, perceptual and conceptual, affective and cognitive, intersubjective and interobjective. It may grow out of a romanticism that offers consumers a respite from a consumer culture they can never really escape, but it clearly offers them an ethics that enables them to navigate its anonymity and excesses in humanistic ways (David Howes, personal communication).

The beautifying of the everyday called for by the Arts and Crafts aesthetic is not simply another example of the "aestheticization of everyday life" under late capitalism as characterized by theorists such as Featherstone, Jameson, and Baudrillard. To the contrary: for GPI Conference attendees the Arts and Crafts aesthetic is associated with traits almost directly antipodal to those these theorists suggest. It is an aesthetics of attending, of soothing simplicity, and of meaning, one that valorizes authenticity and human connection.

Rather than overwhelming the senses, Arts and Crafts aesthetic embodiment is a mode of attention to everyday detail that hones sensory receptivity to the specificity of things, the immersion William Morris saw as the secret to happiness. For many GPI Conference consumers, this mode of attention involves investing emotionally in mundane actions

and objects and turning a critical eye on the way they think of everyday practices. Their interest is embodied, involving both the intellect and senses: it is not merely an intellectual inclination or hobby or a mode of apprehension detached from affect. The Arts and Crafts aesthetic constitutes their sense of being in the world. This is a far cry from the affectless, anesthetized, and sensorially overwhelmed consumer of "aestheticization of everyday life" theorists. This suggests the very serious shortcomings of phenomenological theories of capitalism that treat late capitalism's effects monolithically, and the aesthetic narrowly, whether as what is commonly thought of as "art" or as sense perception alone, rather than as a particular form of being in the world; as, in other words, a form of embodiment.

## NOTES

1 For critiques of this "anti-aesthetic" stance, see Elaine Scarry's *On Beauty and Being Just* (1999) and Isobel Armstrong's *The Radical Aesthetic* (2000).

2 The value of disinterested aesthetic enjoyment has also come under heavy critical scrutiny by feminists, who have argued that a supposedly disinterested stance is actually a covert and controlling voyeurism (http://www.lilithgallery.com/feminist/modern/Feminist-Aesthetics-Critiques.html, accessed November 1, 2010).

3 Williams's position is fully developed by Eagleton (1990) who links the development of the idea of the aesthetic as an autonomous sphere to the rise of bourgeois society, arguing that "the emergence of the aesthetic as a theoretical category is closely bound up with the material processes by which cultural production, at an early stage of bourgeois society becomes 'autonomous' of the social functions it traditionally served" (1990: 9). "Once artefacts become commodities in the market place," Eagleton argues, "they exist for nothing and nobody in particular, and can consequently be rationalized, ideologically speaking, as existing entirely and gloriously for themselves. It is this notion of autonomy or self-referentiality which the new discourse of aesthetics is centrally concerned to elaborate" (1990: 9). As art is sequestered from other social practices, this idea of autonomy provides the middle class with the very ideological model of subjectivity it needs for its operation.

4 Thus, an analysis of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic necessarily trains our attention on the home, a significant locus for ethnographic analysis given Daniel's Miller's (2001) observation that life for many people around the world has become increasingly lived in the home, making it the site of where most of what matters to people takes place.

5 For more on the relationship of Morris's political ideas to his conception of art see his *Art and Socialism*, 1884 and Arscott (2006).

6 In the United States, the Arts and Crafts Movement gave rise to a wide variety of attempts to reinterpret European Arts and Crafts ideals for Americans. In addition to Gustav Stickley's work was that of his brothers, Leopold and John George Stickley; the California architects, Greene and Greene; the Roycroft community founded by Elbert Hubbard; the "Prairie School" of Frank Lloyd Wright; and utopian communities such as Byrdcliffe and Rose Valley (http://www.craftsmanhome.com/news/2006/index.html, accessed August 11, 2010).

7 Many writers and craftspeople adhered to the principles of the Arts and Crafts Movement, producing everything from architectural designs to utopian communities based on its tenets. This included the furniture of Stickley's brothers, Leopold and John George Stickley; the house designs of California architects, Greene and Greene and of Frank Lloyd Wright's "Prairie School;" the writings of Elbert Hubbard and the crafts of his Roycroft Community; and other utopian communities such as Byrdcliffe and Rose Valley. In 1897 in the United States, where the Arts and Crafts Movement was part of the larger Progressive movement dedicated to the education and improvement of the immigrant working classes,

Jane Addams's Paul Revere Pottery in Boston trained daughters of Italian and Jewish immigrants – known as the "Saturday Evening Girls" – in craft production and business skills, providing them an alternative to factory employment and the opportunity to run a business (http://www.arts-crafts.com/archive/pottery/seg.shtml, accessed November 19, 2010).

8 Candace Wheeler, the U.S.'s first professional interior designer, established organizations for design-training for women such as the Society of Decorative Arts in New York to turn "the common and inalienable heritage of feminine skill in the use of the needle into a means of art expression and pecuniary profit" (Kaplan 2004: 252).

9 Haptic originates in the Greek word *απτό*, which means something that can be touched or grasped.

10 Morris devoted the last ten years of his life to book publishing. Dissatisfied with the state of British publishing, he founded the Kelmscott Press with the hope of producing "beautiful" books with a strong visual element: they were filled with exquisite detail, including illustrations, decorative motifs, and printed cloth book covers.

11 Even though Morris combined densely patterned carpets, upholstery, and wallpaper, his designs, which were influenced by nature but with orderly, flat areas of color and a graceful linear quality, had a clean simplicity.

12 Here the space of the viewer's embodiment is extended by a fleeting moment in which activities and relations take place before they are registered by conscious thought, a Deleuzian affect capable of producing creativity, novelty, and transformation (Zembylas 2006: 311). This is significant if we follow the claim of many recent theorists that there can be no ethics without affect. For example, Jane Bennett, following Foucault, argues that ethics is a complex interplay of moral code (moral ideals and metaphysical assumptions condensed into principles and rules) and sensibility, an orchestrated arrangement of affections. The enactment of the code requires a sensibility that generates the impetus to enact it. It is, thus, within this suspended moment of affect where political potentiality lies, a moment allowing intuitions to emerge that cut across the grain of cultural norms (Herzog 2001).

## REFERENCES

Adorno, Theodor and Max Horkheimer, 1979 The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception. *In* Dialectic of Enlightenment. pp. 120–167. London: Verso.

Armstrong, Isobel, 2000 The Radical Aesthetic. Oxford: Blackwell.

Arscott, Caroline, 2006 William Morris: Decoration and Materialism. *In* Marxism and the History of Art: from William Morris to the New Left. Andrew Hemingway, ed. pp. 9–27. London: Pluto Press.

Barker, Jennifer, 2009 The Tactile Eye: Touch and the Cinematic Experience. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Baudrillard, Jean, 1983 Simulations. Paul Foss, Paul Patton and Philip Beitchman, trans. New York: Semiotext(e), Inc.

Benjamin, Andrew and Charles Rice, 2009 Walter Benjamin and the Architecture of Modernity. Melbourne: re.press.

Benjamin, Walter, 1968 The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction. *In* Illuminations. Harry Zohn trans. pp. 117–252. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

Benjamin, Walter, 1999 The Arcades Project. Rolf Tiedemann, ed. Kevin McLaughlin and Howard Eiland, trans. Cambridge MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Bennett, Jane, 2001 The Enchantment of Modern Life: Attachments, Crossings, and Ethics. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Berleant Arnold, 2004 Rethinking Aesthetics: Rouge Essays on Aesthetics and the Arts. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1984 Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste. R. Nice, trans. London: Routledge.

Buck-Morss, Susan, 1992 Aesthetics and Anaesthetics: Walter Benjamin's Artwork Essay Reconsidered. October 62: 3–41.

Cerni, Paula, 2007 The Age of Consumer Capitalism. Cultural Logic, eserver.org/clogic/2007/Cerni.pdf, accessed November 1, 2010.

Classen, Constance, 1997 Foundations for an Anthropology of the Senses. International Social Science Journal 153: 401–412.

Classen, Constance, 2005 Female Tactics: Crafting an Alternative Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries. *In* The Book of Touch. Constance Classen, ed. pp. 228–239. Oxford: Berg.

Crawford, Alan, 2004 United Kingdom: Origins and First Flowering. *In* The Arts and Crafts Movement in Europe and America. Wendy Kaplan, ed. pp. 20–67. England: Thames and Hudson, Ltd.

Csordas, Thomas, 1993 Somatic Modes of Attention. Cultural Anthropology 8(2): 135–156.

Daniel, E. Valentine, 1994 The Individual in Terror. *In* Beyond the Body Proper. Margaret Lock and Judith Farquhar, eds. pp. 135–151. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Deleuze, Giles and Felix Guattari, 2004 A Thousand Plateaus. Brian Massumi, trans. London and New York: Continuum.

Desjerlais, Robert, 1992 Body and Emotion: The Aesthetics of Illness and Healing in the Nepal Himalayas. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

DiLeonardo, Micaela, 2004 Gender, Race, and Class. *In* A Companion to the Anthropology of Politics. David Nugent and Joan Vincent, eds. pp. 135–151. Oxford: Blackwell.

Eagleton, Terry, 1990 The Ideology of the Aesthetic. Oxford: Blackwell.

Ewald, Chase, 1999 Arts and Crafts Style and Spirit: Craftspeople of the Revival. Layton, UT: Gibbs Smith Publishers.

Featherstone, Mike, 1991 Consumer Culture and Postmodernism. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Fisher, Jennifer, 1997 Relational Sense: Towards a Haptic Aesthetics. Parachute 87: 4–11.

Freeman, John Crosby, 1966 The Forgotten Rebel: Gustav Stickley and his Craftsman Mission Furniture. Watkins Glen, NY: Century House.

Haug, Wolfgang, 1986 Critique of Commodity Aesthetics: Appearance, Sexuality, and Advertising in Capitalist Society. Robert Beck, trans. Cambridge: Polity.

Hemingway, Andrew, 2006 Introduction. *In* Marxism and the History of Art. Andrew Hemingway, ed. pp. 1–8. London: Pluto Press.

Herzog, Amy, 2001 Affectivity, Becoming, and the Cinematic Event: Gilles Deleuze and the Futures of Feminist Media Studies. Paper presented at Affective Encounters: Rethinking Embodiment in Feminist Media Studies Conference, University of Turku, School of Art, Literature and Music Media Studies, series A, no. 49: 83–88.

Howes, David, 2003 Sensual Relations: Engaging the Senses in Culture and Social Theory. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Howes, David, 2005 Hyperesthesia, or, the Sensual Logic of Late Capitalism. *In* Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader. David Howes, ed. pp. 281–303. Oxford: Berg.

Jameson, Fredric, 1984 Postmodernism or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Kaplan, Wendy, 2004 Design for the Modern World. *In* The Arts and Crafts Movement in Europe and America: 1880–1920. Wendy Kaplan, ed. pp. 10–19. London: Thames and Hudson.

King, Andrew, 2008 William Morris Arts & Crafts Aesthetic Rhetoric. American Communication Journal Vol. 10, Issue S http://www.acjournal.org/holdings/vol10/s_special/articles/king.php, accessed November 3, 2010.

Kondo, Dorinne, 2005 The Tea Ceremony: A Symbolic Analysis. *In* Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader. David Howes, ed. pp. 192–211. Oxford: Berg.

Maddex, Diane and Alexander Vertikoff, 2003 Bungalow Nation. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc.

Marks, Laura, 2002 Touch: Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Mascia-Lees, F. and P. Sharpe, 2000 Taking a Stand in a Postfeminist World: Toward an Engaged Cultural Criticism. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

McDonald, Bradley, 2006 Performing Marx: Contemporary Negotiations of a Living Tradition. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 1964 The Primacy of Perception. Carleton Dallery, trans. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Miller, Daniel, 2001 Behind Closed Doors. *In* Home Possessions. Daniel Miller, ed. pp. 1–22. Oxford: Berg.

Morris, William, 1880 Collected Works of William Morris. May Morris, ed., vol. XXII. The Beauty of Life. London: Routledge.

Morris, William, 1884 Art and Socialism. Paper presented to the Leicester Secular Society at the Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate, Leicester. http: / / www.marxists.org / archive / morris / works / 1884 / as / as.htm, accessed November 3, 2010.

Morris, William, 1887 Collected Works of William Morris. May Morris, ed., vol. XXIII. The Aims of Art. London: Routledge.

Owen, Paula, 2004 Labels, Lingo, and Legacy: Crafts at a Crossroads. *In* Objects and Meaning. M. Anna Fariello and Paula Owen, eds. pp. 24–35. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Perkins, Wendy, ed. 2010 William Morris and the Art of Everyday Life. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Risatti, Howard, 2007 A Theory of Craft: Function and Aesthetic Expression. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Scarry, Elaine, 1999 On Beauty and Being Just. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Singer, Linda, 1993 Merleau-Ponty on the Concept of Style. *In* The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader: Philosophy and Painting. Galen A. Johnson and Michael B. Smith, eds. pp. 233–244., Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Sobchack, Vivian, 2004 Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Culture Theory. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Solomon, Maynard, 1979 Marxism and Art: Essays Classic and Contemporary. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Stansky, Peter, 1999 From William Morris to Sergeant Pepper: Studies in the Radical Domestic. Palo Alto: The Society for the Promotion of Science and Scholarship.

Stickley, Gustav, 1909 Craftsmen Homes: Architecture and Furnishings of the American Arts and Crafts Movement. 2nd edition. New York: Craftsman Publishing Company.

Thompson, E. P., 1955 [1976] William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Vesely, J., 1986 Stuck on Stickley. Historic Preservation 38(5): 42–49.

Ward, Megan, 2009 William Morris's Conditional Moment. Romanticism and Victorianism on the Net, 53, February 2009.

Watson, M. and E. Shove, 2008 Product, Competence, Project and Practice: DIY and the Dynamics of Craft Consumption. Journal of Consumer Culture 8(1): 69–89.

Williams Raymond, 1978 Marxism and Literature. London: Oxford University Press.

Winter, Robert and Alexander Vertikoff, 1996 American Bungalow Style. New York: Simon and Schuster

Zembylas, Michalinos, 2006 Witnessing in the Classroom: The Ethics and Politics of Affect. Educational Theory 56(3): 305–324.

Zipf, Catherine W., 2007 Professional Pursuits: Women and the American Arts and Crafts Movement. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.

# CHAPTER 2 AFFECT
## *Learning Affect/ Embodying Race*

*Ana Yolanda Ramos-Zayas*

### INTRODUCTION

> "The ghetto kids are just the wild kids you see in the hallways, with their baggy jeans, large shirts, chains … acting hard" *[AY: "When you say 'act hard,' what do you mean?"]* "Like you have to be serious … not very friendly … to show you're tough, that they can't step on you … It's just how they feel inside. If you look behind the surface, there is sadness. They try to fit in and be accepted. But they act hard sometimes for protection, not because they're really like that. It's a way for them to be cool, to pretend they're tough, even if they're not sure why they have to be. But I also know that some of these kids, specially the immigrant kids that just got here, they do that because they're afraid of Blacks. That's the main reason. Maybe they never saw a Black person like the ones here or … maybe they were picked on. They don't know how to act, so they're just serious and stay out of trouble. But it's a change you notice. You know Robert, right? He's from Ecuador, bilingual program? He was a small skinny kid and people made fun of him, but he was a sweet, friendly kid. Now you see him and he's like a different person … I don't know, he used to be shy and quiet and now … he's still quiet, but in a more, you know, like he's in his own world and doesn't want anyone to talk to him. I personally think he's very depressed and wouldn't be surprised if he quit school and just disappeared one day."
>
> (Emília Ribeiro, Brazilian student at a high school in Newark, NJ)

An outgoing and thoughtful student who had arrived from Brazil as a young child in the early 1990s, Emília Ribeiro offered an insightful depiction of the pressure some

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

migrant students experienced to "act hard" when I interviewed her the fall of 2004. Like other Latin American students whom I met in two predominantly Latino neighborhoods in Newark, New Jersey, between 2001 and 2008, Emília attended to the style involved in descriptions of "ghetto kids" and, more significant, to emotive and affective transformations that Americanization required. As suggested in Emília's narrative. The distinction between "acting hard" as a protective performance seemed almost objectless and lacking focus, while "being hard," was an almost unalterable quality attributed to an African American psyche. Like other U.S.-born Latino and Latin American migrants in Newark, Emília identified "fear" as the primary emotion that guided Latin American youth's reading of African Americans.

While I return to a more thorough analysis and contextualization of Emília's statement in the next sections, this introductory vignette anchors some of the main theoretical goals of this essay. The present essay seeks to expand scholarly approaches to affect, the anthropology of the body, and racialization. It examines the nexus among everyday constructions of racial subjects, the affective worlds of those subjects, and the potential material consequences of an emotional ethos that is oftentimes regulated by the interests of state and market. I consider how the body serves as a broader conceptual lens to examine how affect and emotion are produced and experienced within the paradigm of racialization. Some questions I consider in this exploration are: What do individuals' affective worlds tell us about multiscale experiences of race, racial ideologies, and racialization practices? What kind of emotional work do embodied practices of learning race require? How does becoming a racial subject in the U.S. and transnationally alter one's affective world and perspectives on the emotional and racial subjectivities of others? Under neoliberalism there has been an intensification in the cultural standardization and organization of feelings and sentiments (Haskell 1985). This essay considers how this organization of feelings and sentiments intersect with everyday evaluations of racial difference and ongoing processes of "racial learning," particularly among Latin American migrant and U.S.-born Latino youth. Racial learning is here understood as a behavior-contingent aspect of social action and a phenomenological experience, as well as a production of bodies through everyday disciplining and normalization in service of state and market goals (cf. Foucault 1977).

The ethnographic materials presented here are drawn from fieldwork conducted in two predominantly Latino neighborhoods in Newark, NJ, between 2001 and 2008, as well as in private and public high schools in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, and Santurce, Puerto Rico, over several months in 2004, 2005, and 2006. The two largest Latino neighborhoods in Newark, North Broadway and the Ironbound, consist of predominantly Puerto Rican and Brazilian populations, respectively. I examine how Latin American and Latino populations in urban areas of the U.S. navigate unfamiliar racial situations through the development of a quotidian emotional epistemology; that is, through a set of rules and assumptions about affect and its adequate expression, interpretations of how others feel or should feel, and the creation or performance of an affective persona. These rules and assumptions are informed both by U.S. and transnational racial ideologies, social practices around performances of Blackness, socioeconomic hierarchies, and expectations of belonging on multiple scales, like the neighborhood, nation state, and the market. I am particularly attentive to how Latin American migrant and U.S.-born Latino youth engage in a process of racial learning

that render them street therapists of sorts. In Newark, a majority Black city, Latinos filtered race through complicated affective lenses that also drew from Latin American views of racial democracy and what I have elsewhere referred to as a "cartography of racial democracy" (Ramos-Zayas 2008).

The internalization of racial systems, or learning how race operates in particular contexts, requires the suppression of some emotions and the performance or expression of others. Racial learning is transacted through feelings and transgressions in practice that may lead to unpleasant emotional dissonance, as feelings are produced by and give meaning to racial encounters between individuals and among individuals and context-based racial systems. Critical here is the question of how to examine affect within the paradigm of racialization when, as it is, racial projects oftentimes produce a racial subjectivity that is affectively excessive and emotionally overdetermined.

As Ann Stoler has demonstrated, a focus on "colonial intimacy" or the politics of intimacy complicates our understanding of colonial oppression and anti-colonial resistance (Stoler 2009). Colonial and imperialist projects have historically identified the intimate realm – of sexual liaisons, childrearing practices, domestic practices, and life in the private realm more broadly – as powerful sites where colonized populations might develop strategies of anti-colonial resistance. These intimate sites offer an important complement to examinations of colonial and imperial oppression that have focused exclusively on the public realm of official metropolitan policies and governance, and open the possibility to challenge limiting (male-centered) interpretations of resistance and counter-insurgency. The making of race, the management of empire, and the congruence of imperial projects about the globe have always been central constituents of the workings of the intimate domain. In relation to my project on U.S.-born Latinos and Latin American migrants in Newark, I situate this politics of intimacy in light of the racial project of the U.S. nation-state. Michael Omi and Howard Winant's analytic framework of racialization emphasizes the ways that race or racial difference cannot be presumed to be based upon the natural characteristics of identifiable groups or the biological effects of ancestry. Rather racial difference has to be actively produced as such, and continually reproduced and transformed, so that race is always entangled in social relations and conflicts and retains an enduring (seemingly intractable) significance precisely because its forms and substantive meanings are always eminently historical and mutable (Omi and Winant 1986: 64–66; De Genova and Ramos-Zayas 2003).

Inspired by Stoler's 2009 "colonial intimacy" and Omi and Winant's 1986 "racialization" theory, I argue that studies of the anthropology of the body ought to shift theoretical discussions from culture and "self" to a focus on a socially grounded and politically situated "personhood" that transcends an interiority-focused subjectivity in order to take into account racial and colonial projects in their everyday manifestations. This paradigmatic shift allows us to be vigilant of the ways in which quotidian racialization practices are involved in the regulation of affect for material state and market gains. Approaching what I understand as an embodied racialized affect, in this way, allows us to focus on the complexity of an interiority that always-already occupies a social and political space; a claim to personhood in the midst of social determinism. Rather than flattening the affect of the racialized poor, an embodied racialized affect

centers on how the poor and marginal examine their affective and sentimental experiences, enter social consciousness through affect, and might explain conditions of social subordination accordingly.

I am not in search of the "essence" of emotional, passional, or attitudinal modes of consciousness; nor do I want to delineate their dynamics as if they were independent of the circumstances in which they occur. In this chapter, a phenomenological approach is tempered by the political economic context in which affect is grounded, so that a "natural" or "intimate" attitude is not extrapolated from the always-already racial projects in which they are ensconced. Like Vincent Crapanzano (2004: 103–110), I question the possibility of a full phenomenological reduction given that we are embedded in a linguistically-endorsed universe that prevents a pre-reflexive moment that is fully divorced from its endorsement. While affect may have its own linguistic and cultural logic, it is based on experienced of a socially encumbered personhood, not simply a cultural interior-focused "self." A focus on structure in relation to phenomenology allows the possibility not only for different modes of consciousness to be produced in different linguistic or cultural contexts, but to recognize that these differences are grounded and constitutive of particular political economic and historical conditions of inequality. Approaching affect through a racialization paradigm sheds light on an anthropology of the body by foregrounding a dynamic perspective on space and context (Lefebvre 1991).

By bridging discourses about affect, on the one hand, and the phenomenology of those affective states, on the other, one is able to examine the collective level of state construction of a racialized affect and the individual, visceral and experiential phenomenology of affect in everyday life (cf. Jenkins 1991). Through an analysis of individual's visceral, intimate experiences of the material environment, perspectives on embodiment can better capture where perception begins, when it constitutes and is constituted by culture, and how the very experience of perceiving might be influenced by social location and experiences of race. Efforts to re-embody anthropology have focused on how the body is not only an object to be studied in relation to culture, but is to be considered the subject of culture (Csordas 1990: 5). Analyses of perception (like Merleau-Ponty's "preobjective") and practice (Bourdieu's "habitus"), critical aspects of social scientific inquiry, are grounded in the body. Likewise, it is the physical involvement of self, rather than an absence of rationality, that distinguishes emotion from other kinds of cognition. There still remains the need here for an examination of a socially embodied personhood, not just self. Indeed, it is through the study of affect and emotion that anthropology may best be fully re-embodied (Csordas 1990; Lyon 1995).

The argumentative structure of this essay is developed in three main substantive sections. First, I consider how the transition from "happy immigrant to depressed minority" is articulated through an emotional epistemology that draws from national foundational ideologies, specially the American dream, and expectations of migrants in Newark, NJ. Secondly, I draw from ethnographic work in Brazil and Puerto Rico, the countries of origin of many of the young people whom I met in Newark and their families, to highlight the transnational racial registries from which Latino and Latin American youth come to understand their own affective worlds in the U.S. In particular, I examine how, in the context of high return-migration in Puerto Rico and

Brazil, views of a "depressed American" are associated with having subscribed to a U.S. racial system and foregoing ideologies of racial democracy that dictate, among other things, that there is a distinction between "real racism" and other, presumably more benign, forms of racial difference. Negative affect becomes both local and transnational cornerstone of a structure of feelings that is fundamental to rendering transnational neoliberal subjects emotionally legible. Finally, I turn to the most explicitly material consequences of embodied racialized affect by looking at the emotional requirements which neoliberalism demands of labor and which young people begin to prepare for even before formally entering the job market. Inspired by Arlie Hochschild's concept of emotional labor (1983), I identify a process that requires Latino and Latin American youth to conceive Americanization in light of cultivating racial learning and refining affect, while selectively internalizing certain feeling rules, including engaging in a process of "making Blackness right." This emotionally laborious process requires an embodiment of urbanism that rejects a "defective" Blackness, associated with "resentful" or "angry" African Americans in the U.S., while embodying cosmopolitan traits that are in alignment with the interests of neoliberalism. In this final section, thus, discussions of emotional labor are extended to young people who have barely entered the labor market, but whose emotional capital is being measured according to their prospective roles as consumers and workers in potentially exploitative service sector work.

## From Happy Immigrant to Depressed Minority: An Emotional Epistemology of Race in Newark, NJ

As shown in the introductory vignette, Emília adopted a psychological lens to trace Robert's transformation from happy-go-lucky and almost naïve to somber, "depressed," and hardened. This is the transformation from "happy immigrant" to "depressed minority" that Americanization in urban U.S. entailed. Learning negative affect has become a form of racial learning for many of the recently arrived immigrants from Latin America who have settled in Newark, NJ. Being able to be dark and having a different public mood was key to gaining urban competency and letting go of the folksy or backward ways associated with being an "immigrant" in the urban, majority-minority city (Ramos-Zayas 2008). Among the poor and working class, letting go of that happy or cheery emotional style was an emblematic of a particular kind of Americanization that, in fact, reversed a mainstream U.S. social urging to be peppy, sunny, and cheery. It has been noted that contemporary emotional norms in the U.S. favor a "good cheer" (Kotchemidova 2005) or "compulsory happiness" (in Wilkins 2008) that represents a cooling of emotions and discourage any emotional intensity by expecting a sociability and exchange of pleasantries as the everyday standard of social interactions in dominant middle-class (White) contexts (Stearns 1994, cited in Wilkins 2008: 112). Among U.S.-born Latinos (and perhaps other U.S. domestic minorities) and, to various degrees, among Latin American migrants, it has been the embodiment of various emotions coded as "depression" – as well as "anger," "aggression," and other forms of negative affect that I examine elsewhere (Ramos-Zayas 2009) – what has operated as critique of racialization practices in the U.S. and re-racialization experiences in transnational contexts of origin, including Brazil and Puerto Rico in my research.

Rendering someone "depressed" becomes a form of tacit structural critique because it points to what is lacking or how things should be different. After all, why would a kid like Robert (to whom Emília refers in her comment), who had hailed from the Ecuadorian highlands where he and his family had endured scarcity and marginality not be happy, cheery, and grateful to "America," the Land of Opportunity? Under these conditions, how could Robert's "depression" be legitimate or justified?

In Emília's statement, there are various ways in which depression becomes a structural symbol that suggests the process by which an "immigrant" embodies race in the U.S. and effectively learns (cognitively and viscerally / phenomenologically) a new racial system. As Emília suggested, among Latin American migrants like Roberto, race is embodied through a performance of Blackness that involves not only wearing a certain style of clothes, but performative alterations in one's affect; in particular, a shift from a happiness associated with naïveté and even backwardness to a "depression" associated with hardened but also cosmopolitan urban life. In the U.S., negative affect in general, and depression in particular, has been highly medicalized (Burr and Chapman 2004). Emília's insinuation that Robert may one day drop out of school and "disappear" points to how this pathological approach to negative affect is an important aspect of how some racial subjects are rendered legible. Depathologizing negative affect might allow for an examination of how global politics and history manifest themselves at the level of lived, embodied experiences (Cvetkovich 2006: 461).

Nevertheless, in everyday emotional epistemologies, as individuals imagine how others must feel, depression simultaneously serves as a racializing pathology, a measure of racial learning, and structural critique. Relevant to this conception of emotional epistemology is Bourdieu's habitus a system of enduring dispositions are the collectively inculcated and act as structuring structures that generate internalized principles, practices and representations (Bordieu 1977: 72; 1990; 1998). This system similarly generates ways of thinking and feeling about the world that are mediated through social experiences and structures. Dispositions toward other people and communities, which in turn influence behavior and action, are always implicated in shifts in meaning and interpretation and how individuals come to view themselves in relation to others (similar to William's "knowable communities"). These are grounded in the body, including discussions of taste (cf. Csordas 1990), so that state regulation is now experienced largely as self-regulation and self-disciplining (cf. Foucault 1977).

To view migrant kids who "act hard" solely in terms of negative affect would be an incomplete assessment of the emotional epistemology manifested in Emília's quote. This negative affect, which Emília described as "depression," must be situated in the context of Newark, NJ, a predominantly African American city, associated with urban decay, corruption, gang violence, and unemployment. This context exists in contradistinction to a dominant state project that involves reinforcing the foundational mythology of the American Dream (Ramos-Zayas 2003). In relation to migrants, an attitude of gratefulness has been cultivated by the nation state around the image of a "super citizen migrant" (Honig 2001) who is more of a citizen than domestic minorities would ever be. In her examination of "the immigrant as citizen," Bonnie Honig argues that exceptionalist accounts of U.S. democracy are inextricably intertwined with the myth of an "immigrant America": "The immigrant functions to reassure workers of the possibility of upward mobility in an economy that rarely delivers on that promise, while also disciplining native-born poor, domestic minorities, and unsuccessful foreign laborers

into believing that the economy fairly rewards dedication and hard work" (Honig 2001: 73–74). Of course this also animates the suspicion of immigrant foreign-ness insofar as "their" admirable hard work puts "us" out of jobs, as Honig emphasizes. The association between "becoming American" and "becoming Black" among some Latin American migrants in Newark may perhaps suggest an unearthing of the hegemonic "immigrant America" mythology in that it places "race" rather than "ethnicity" as a central tenement in the road from "immigrant" to citizen (cf. Honig 2001). Nevertheless, the everyday policing of the boundaries of Blackness by Latino and Latin American migrant youth also reflected a belief among students and staff in predominantly Latino public schools in Newark in the "supercitizen immigrant," the migrants whose trajectory involves avoiding both Blackness and "acting White," as well as meaningful associations with Black Americans. This reinforces the American dream mythology, notwithstanding economic crises and impossible upward mobility expectations. Among Latinos, those who cheerfully take on heavy workloads and oppressive work conditions, *without complaining or denouncing injustices*, are counterposed to those who are viewed as lazy, welfare-dependent, or who have a "bad attitude" (i.e. who complain, appear "resentful," and denounce injustice in some way). Thus, as a state project, cheerfulness and appreciativeness can be exploited to serve market goals and interests in creating a tractable labor in a way that "bad attitude" might not be.

An important component of neoliberal policies – including the privileging of corporate and real estate interests, gentrification and urban development through cultural venues, and aiming to attract middle and upper middle classes to the city through the "Newark Renaissance" (Newman 2004) – is that they foster new definitions of "good citizenship." These definitions of good citizenship oftentimes disconnect the citizen from the state and establish personal responsibility and emotional adequacy as the main qualities necessary for improving urban life. In Newark, African American Mayor Cory Booker embodies, to various degrees, the success, respectability, *and* psycho-social adequacy to which a predominantly Black city like Newark should aspire in order to combat its aggressive national image. Booker's public persona and image, as it has been circulated and promoted in Newark and nationwide, illustrates the critical characteristics expected of a quintessential neoliberal subject. These characteristics, rather than centering on professional achievements, public accomplishments, or even lifestyle, are, in fact, more directly concerned with overall emotional adequacy, quasi-spiritual values, and appropriate affect. Elected in 2006, Cory Booker ran on a platform that stressed "safety" and "development" as key concerns, while characterizing his government in light of accountability and transparency, in contradistinction to the levels of corruption of the Sharpe James' administration (Kocieniewski 2006a). Throughout his campaigns and election, Booker was described as an "Ivy League-schooled, Buddhist-inspired, vegetarian major who was raised in an affluent Bergen County suburb" (Kocieniewski 2006b). A guest on an episode of *The Oprah Winfrey Show* dedicated to the spiritual quest for one's life passions, it was Booker's emotive and spiritual persona, not his urban policies, that gained him national recognition and acclaim. Booker has, in effect, learned how to do Blackness right. This set of psycho-social and quasi-spiritual attributes of a good citizen, although largely undertheorized, are critical to visions of an effective neoliberal city (Ramos-Zayas, n.d.). These affective, quasi-spiritual, and psychological practices have become critical to the differentiation of (neoliberal) citizens, regardless of actual legal status in the U.S.

In Newark, many U.S.-born and immigrant Latinos acquired racial knowledge through the continuous scrutiny of how African Americans (or even U.S.-born Puerto Ricans) were institutionally racialized and how these U.S.-born minorities themselves actively assumed or rejected such racialization practices; of how such anti-Black subordination operated in historical and political contexts and impacted individual aspirations and opportunities; of how racial performances enhanced one's cosmopolitanism, modernity, and urban competency, while redefining gender, sexuality, class, and generational subjectivities; and how bipolar (Black / White) perspectives of race in the U.S. converged and diverged from configurations of "race" in one's country of origin or ancestry. Depression and other forms of negative affect were ultimately associated not with just any form of Americanization, but with an urban Americanization associated with Blackness. Youth of color in Newark, NJ, but also in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, and Santurce, Puerto Rico, two secondary sites of my fieldwork, viewed "depression" – or more precisely, the presentation of a depressive or withdrawn person – as evidence that a migrant possessed urban competency, had developed racial knowledge, and had become, in effect, Americanized. While in Newark, these characterizations were drawn in contradistinction to a cheerful, happy or friendly disposition associated with being new to the U.S., naïve, or being a "Latin American hillbilly," in Puerto Rico and Brazil the emotional shifts noted in return migrants was more complicated. At times they did signal a connection to a cosmopolitan Third World Blackness, but other times they pointed to a defective process that suggested that these migrants had bought into a U.S. racial system that in Brazil and Puerto Rico was viewed as simplistic and counterproductive and which associated race talk in the U.S. with a "constant complaining" attributed to African Americans or a condition in which race had become overdeterministic of individuals' circumstances. In Brazil and Puerto Rico, these perspectives on race were, for the most part, associated with "Black America" and the embodiment of "Blackness" among return migrants.

## Emotional Epistemologies and Transnational Racial Systems

This section highlights the transnational racial registries from which Latino and Latin American youth come to understand their own affective worlds in the U.S.: the ways in which, in the context of high return-migration, views of the "depressed American" in Santurce, Puerto Rico and Belo Horizonte, Brazil, are associated with having subscribed to a U.S. racial system.

The image of "Black America" in Newark is suggestive of and sometimes conflated with possessing urban competency or being Americanized, as well as viewed in terms of gendered forms of aggression (Ramos-Zayas n.d.). What is important to note is that "Black America" has also become a set of images that are exported and modified transnationally and known to Brazilian and Puerto Rican migrants even prior to migration. Albeit from significantly different political and historical perspectives that are beyond the scope of this essay (Ramos-Zayas n.d.), the cities of Belo Horizonte (and Minas Gerais more generally) and Santurce (and the San Juan metropolitan area more broadly) have witnessed a significant degree of migration and return migration with the U.S. northeast, including Newark, NJ. Also, they have been important spaces in the re-racialization of return Brazilian and Puerto Rican migrants, respectively.

While in Newark "Blackness" is associated with urban competency, cosmopolitanism and aggression in complex ways, in Latin America it is embodied in return migrants and circulated through popular conceptions of "America" as "Black America." In Brazil and Puerto Rico, Americanization was understood through an emotional epistemology that served as an important transnational, cosmopolitan racial project in and of itself, and was experienced in contradistinction to an enduring ideology of "racial democracy" (Freyre [1933]1995; cf. Sheriff 2001).

It is not my main goal to contribute directly to the robust literature on "racial democracy" in Latin America, but to consider the ramifications that some of the postulates of this ideology might have on the everyday experiences and interpretations of racial situations among U.S.-born Latino and Latin American migrants in the U.S. For most of the 20th century the Latin American ideology of "racial democracy" and its caveat of "racial mixing" (*mestizaje/metiçagem*) and "whitening" (*blanqueamiento/embranquecemento*) served as benchmark of racial tolerance, deployed in academic and activist circles in contradistinction to a legally segregated and racially intolerant U.S. Brazil, in particular, became emblematic of "anti-racialism" as the "racialism" of the U.S. insisted in the existence of discrete – largely Black or White – racial groups (Telles 2004). The view of Latin America as a "racial democracy" was thus, since its inception, a relational racial logic that existed mostly in contradistinction to a U.S. segregationist logic. This project aims to reconcile a perspective of "race" as a deeply emotional and intimate aspect of people's everyday life which, only under certain circumstances, is explicitly articulated, enunciated, or engaged with politically.

A connection between Americanization, racialization, and negative affect among Latin American populations has been cultivated in transnational contexts. In the public and private schools that served as fieldsites for the Brazil and Puerto Rico components of my research, the production of a migrant Other was rooted in a view that an emotional repertoire was established, reproduced, and altered through the process of migration and return. In both Belo Horizonte and Santurce, I identified a dominant discourse that constructed migrants returning from Brazilian and Puerto Rican areas of the U.S. as "emotionally defective." These returnees oftentimes became a modified proxy for local images of American Blackness or what race in the U.S. "looks like." Characterized in terms of negative affect – as being depressed, sad, gloom, detached, aggressive – return migrants were often read in Belo Horizonte and Santurce public and private schools as subjects of pop psychology analyses drawn from self-help literature; as populations in need of counseling or therapy; or as individuals who ranged from being disengaged to being narcissistic. For instance:

> *Alexis Rodriguez*, Senior at one of the public high schools with the highest population of return migrants in Puerto Rico: "The thing is that some of them [students that come from the U.S.], they don't want to come here. Their parents forced them or they had to come because of something else, but not because they wanted to. They don't want to come here so they rebel. They don't follow rules, they don't do their work, they don't do nothing. I think it's mostly the guys that act that way. They get stupid, they don't want to do work and they think they are the shit. They get this air about them. 'I'm the shit because I came from there.' It's an attitude. They're like 'I'm from the ghetto' and 'I'm all that.'"
>
> From field notes (August 10, 2004) taken on an exchange between three Brazilian high school students at a Belo Horizonte public school. This is a school that a few of the

> students I met in Newark had attended before migrating to the U.S.: Mariela, Renata, and Ana Paula commented on how the most recently arrived student, Marcelo, would probably not be interested in being interviewed for my project, because he was very withdrawn. Nobody knew much about him, he kept to his own. He was depressed and could not fit in. Mariela declared: "He's more American than Brazilian. The way he talks, never smiles. They oversized clothes. He really wanted to stay there, because he knew he would not belong here. It was his parents who forced him to come."

While Alexis pointed to an almost chauvinistic "attitude" he noted in Puerto Ricans who had either been born in the U.S. or spent a significant time there, Mariela, Renata and Ana Paula viewed Marcelo as emotionally defective, as an outcome of migration gone wrong. The fact that Marcelo's family did not appear to have significantly improved their economic condition through migration was central to this psychological reading of Marcelo. What did Marcelo, or Robert, the Ecuadorian student Emília alludes to in the Introduction, or the students who Alexis refers to above, *feel*? Discomfort in their own skin and not knowing how to approach others back home were common ways in which return migrants viewed their own experiences. They were the kids who did not know how to be and that fear of not "getting it right" was what, when expressed, became coded as "depression" in the emotional epistemologies that circulate among their more integrated peers. These returnees experienced a form of anticipatory disorientation, a constant wondering of what might happen if their actions, behavior, and appearance did not come out right. At an affective level, the possibility of humiliation and shame were a constant threat to their dignity, and this condition of being indignant was situated in specific class and racial social locations. Although these conditions of being indignant are class-specific, they are such a constitutive aspect to a broader emotional epistemology – of discomfort, awkwardness, etc. – that social location gets lost in translation and the focus becomes on questioning intent, genuineness, etc. Descriptions of disappointment with the unmet expectations of migration in both economic and intimate ways were common among Brazilian and Puerto Rican returnees who had expected to improve their economic relationship, resolve family conflicts, gain educational opportunities, etc., yet had returned with little or nothing to show for their stay in the U.S.

The significant geopolitical and historical differences between Brazil and Puerto Rico accounted for the ideological and political role that migration, in general, and return migration, in particular played in the social fabric of Belo Horizonte and Santurce, respectively. The role that "Brazil" and "Puerto Rico" have played in U.S. academic research and popular interest influences how the migrants from these countries (and, in some instances, the subsequent U.S.-born generations) are classified in Newark; as Jemima Pierre (2004) eloquently argues, the ways in which immigrant countries are imagined supply the tools for the racialization of those migrants in the U.S. The role of "migration" was qualitatively different in Brazil and Puerto Rico. While Brazil still considers itself a "Country of Immigrants," rather than one that supplies any significant percentage of its population to the global migration flow, migration is ubiquitous in the political and economic history of Puerto Rico. Nearly as many Puerto Ricans live on the Island of Puerto Rico as in the U.S. mainland. In fact, in Puerto Rico, migration to the U.S. was central to the creation of a Puerto Rican middle class on the Island in the 1940s and 1950s (and a continuing strategy for economic survival into the present).

What is important to highlight for the purpose of this chapter, however, is that when I asked students who had not migrated why they thought return migrants were depressed or withdrawn, their responses were remarkably similar in Belo Horizonte and Santurce: they claimed that these returnees not only had experienced the "real racism" of the U.S. but, more significantly, that they had "bought into" an U.S.-bred understanding of race and racism that could in fact *cause* depression (or resentment or anger). While rarely subscribing to facile assumptions that the U.S. was "more racist" than their own countries, these Brazilian and Puerto Rican youth, across class, did view race and racism in the U.S. as qualitatively different in ways capable of directly impacting, not so much institutional racism, but how affect was manifested and embodied. Particularly critical to discussions of negative affect in Belo Horizonte and Santurce was the distinction most individuals drew between a "real racism" associated with the U.S. and a Latin American racism that was presumably "less real." A view of U.S. Blackness as a stylistic or commercial culture provided yet another space for slippage between "real racism" and a racism perceived as more "malleable," a distinction which was coded in forms of humor, the glamorization of poverty-stricken urban spaces, the commodification of Blackness, and highlighting differences in nationality rather than race (especially in the case of how Dominicans were viewed in Puerto Rico).

While it was clear to these young people that structural racism existed (e.g. police brutality, the predominance of the Black poor, etc), they usually did not see as strong a connection between institutional forms of racism and those more overt, quotidian, or visceral forms. For instance, when I asked a Brazilian student at a public school in Belo Horizonte whether she thought that racist slurs could hurt people, she replied: "If the person is poor or their situation [wellbeing] is depending on that person [who uttered the slur], yes. But if you're rich, what would you care what other people call you? It's just a name." In Puerto Rico, a student at a public high school in Santurce remarked: "It may hurt their feelings, but if you don't let them know [that you're hurt by their racist comments], you're not giving them the satisfaction. It really doesn't matter. It's all about how you react and stay positive. You cannot get resentful… you'd go crazy!" These distinctions presupposed intense moments of emotional management. They enabled particular constructions of racism in the U.S. as both "more real" (than the one manifested in Latin America) and more overdeterministic (even humor-less) in everyday interactions. In redrawing the parameters of what constituted *racismo de verdad* (or *verdadeiro racismo*, in Portuguese), on the one hand, and other forms of racism, discussions revolved about a question of sincerity, or being able to discern between the truth of the feeling and the appearance of the feeling behind a particular racial situation or behavior. A concern with sincerity and, likewise, with authenticity located race on behaviors, practices, and sentiments that were premised on distinctions in trust and intent (cf. John Jackson 2006).

> *Gabriela* (student at a private high school in Belo Horizonte): "Here we also have some upper-class people who pretend that they are from the favela." [AY: "Really? Why do you think they do that?"] "I don't understand why they have to pretend they are poor. Maybe they think it's fashionable to be poor. They claim that their sneakers are fake, when they are the real expensive brand. It's the reverse of what you'd expect! They call it favela chic" [laughed].

The "favela" in Brazil or areas associated with Puerto Rican Blackness – like "*Piñones*," "*el caserío*," "*la barriada*" – served as sites of contestations and reformulations of a racial hegemony in a similar way as did the U.S. "ghetto." The very disruptions engendered by these contestations relied upon the discursive split between globalization, in terms of system of capital allocation and inequality, on the one hand, and particular localities that symbolize authenticity and valorization of alternative forms of cultural capital, especially conceived as "the street," "the ghetto," "the projects," and so on, on the other. "The ghetto" has become an international space, a space as central to images of the U.S. as the more iconic touristic sites officially exported by U.S. tourism industry to other parts of the world, even though the glamorization of the ghetto ultimately concealed the everyday corporeal dangers faced by its inhabitants (cf. Forman 2002, Johnson 2003). These were ideological spaces, not simply context, but the producer and product of social relations (cf. Lefebvre 1991), including racializing practices of defective embodied forms in transnational contexts.

What local ideological goals does faking poverty serve in Santurce and Belo Horizonte? A nationalist goal that preserves foundational myths of racial democracy by focusing on Blackness as not only symbol of oppression, but as marketable commodity without much structural or historical resonance. Young people in both public and private schools in Belo Horizonte and Santurce remarked on what they view as "fake poverty" in ways that suggested that selective identification with the marginalized was a strategic requirement of a Third-World cosmopolitanism. Nevertheless, although in some ways racial discrimination was acknowledged, there were numerous references to individuals who actively tried to learn to perform "Blackness" (in its commercial forms, related to fashion, music, and style) even if they were not phenotypically considered "Black" or very dark-skinned to really frame a particular instance as "real racism" rather than "pretend racism." In the following quotes, the focus is constantly shifting around who the target of racism was. Racism against Blacks is acknowledged, but also Blackness is diversified by emphasizing a spatial and cultural complexity – for instance, being "from Pinones," showing solidarity with "rastafari," or equating Black with "Dominican," in the case of Puerto Rican youth.

> *Frances* (public school, Puerto Rico): "I've noticed that overall there's a lot of racism against Blacks. People saying things like 'monkey,' stuff like that. Some people take it as a joke. It's not only with people from the [Virgin] Islands, but also with Puerto Ricans who are Black. I feel like I'm Black, even though I'm not very dark-skinned. Because my mother is Black and I consider myself Black. Maybe it has to do with being from Piñones … I chose to put 'Rastafari' on my senior t-shirt, instead of my name. I've seen that in universities too, that it's an identification with Black movements from the Caribbean. I think that those people that are Rastafari are very patriotic, they want Puerto Rico to be free. It's a mixture, they are Rastafari and they are nationalist. I see other people who have that conscience too. I see that in people coming from New York, from the U.S. You see people saying 'I'm Dominican, I'm Black.' I think it's because there was so much injustice there that … you know. But it's also a problem to say that Blacks are discriminated against. Because you see a lot of prejudice by Blacks against Blacks."
>
> *Mariela*: "You see all this construction going on around here? All those workers are Dominican." [AY: "Why do you think that is?"] "I think it's in the heritage. I read this work by a psychologist that said that it had to do with the type of indigenous population we had here. The indigenous population here was different from those in the Dominican Republic … The Tainos here had everything accessible. They had the golden nuggets in

> the river, everything accessible, so they didn't have to work hard for anything. They had everything they needed right next to them."
>
> *Vanessa*: "Yeah, even back then they were just happy, not bugged down by those [racial] differences." [Reference to a Swedish study of 80 countries that claimed that Puerto Rico was "the happiest country in the world."]
>
> *Renata* [public school, Brazil] commented regarding the Affirmative Action-like quotas begun in Brazilian public universities: "There are more Blacks here now than ever. Everybody wants to be Black to get into the university! … You hear someone saying 'I'm Black' and I just don't see that person as Black. Maybe they do feel Black or maybe they're just saying that, to feel special."

General perception that Blackness in Latin America "felt" different than the image these youths had of the experiences of African Americans in the U.S. While racism was acknowledged among students in both Brazil and Puerto Rico, the targets of racism were less readily identifiable partly because of the still significant tendency to focus not only on color, but more significantly on appearance, socioeconomics, and spatial and symbolic markers, including "looking Black," "being from Piñones," or identifying as "Rastafari." Most Latin American migrants, and many U.S.-born Latino youth, insisted that "Blackness" was predominantly a signifier of skin color, phenotype, and cultural or folkloric practices, not primarily an emblem of structural subordination.

Patricia de Santana Pinho (2005) argues in the case of Brazil, a U.S.-centric Black experience has been viewed as the most modern form of Blackness within the African diaspora. U.S. Blackness is viewed as a modern and politicized racial identity in contradistinction to Brazil's Africanness, which is viewed as "excess" of culture. This also reinscribes dichotomies between tradition / modernity, culture / politics, backward / advanced. The hegemonic project of the Afro-Brazilian movement is situated between an "African past" and a "US American future," thus introducing Pinho's main question: "Why are Afro-Brazilians urged to follow the U.S. model of race politics that rely on a liberal multiculturalism in which the idea of diversity is inert?" Pursuing a Foucauldian line of argument, Pinho notes that it is precisely disciplinary power that produces social identities under liberalism. Understood as such, the performance of race did away with the racialized subject and inadvertently displaced and fetishized race onto traits like hair, clothes, musical tastes and consumption patterns; it was from these traits that many young Latinos drew to create their racial presentations.

Renata's quote was suggestive of how claiming Blackness as such would not be an issue as long as it conferred benefits. In the conversation between Vanessa and Mariela, happiness and other positive affects in Latin America was implicitly counter-posed to complaining, which was also equated with depression and other negative affects. In fact, happiness and humor became a moral sentiment implicated in the creation of certain styles of political order. Contempt toward those who complained, including individuals who had gained racial consciousness associated with U.S. minorities, was acted as mechanism for ranking people based on their affect. At times it seemed that, unless racism was expressed as open disgust, not just contempt, it did not really count; being the object of someone's disgust rendered racism physiological.

The tendency to perceive race as a physical property, personal possession, or emotional essence at times obscured the character of race as an aspect of social relations

and power inequalities. The closest Blackness was to being staged, planned, and consumed and contained within a language of emotional and psychological pathology, the more it served as cultural capital for Latin American and Latino youth both in Latin America and the U.S. In this sense, Latinos viewed African Americans not only (or even primarily) in light of a dominant criminality discourse, but in relation to psychiatric labels – e.g. passive-aggressive, depressed, lacking self-esteem, being violent, harboring resentment from childhood experiences, etc. This was also how Americanization was viewed in the countries of origin in relation to return migrants.

While a characteristic of the contemporary public sphere might be a denial of the body in favor of the logic of abstraction, racial learning relied on an embodied affect and emotional epistemology that, at times and in certain contexts, appeared liberatory and a source of social critique. As Habermas's examination of "phantom bodies" and the "public sphere" establishes, individuals whose embodied identities are excluded from finding expression in officially sanctioned terms seek it through the formation of "subaltern counter-publics" which rely on "hidden transcripts" that run parallel and counter to the official transcript (Habermas 1994; Scott 1992). At a phenomenological and visceral level, longing served as an underside of depression.

> *Cristina* (public school, Puerto Rico): "I was the happiest in New York. Because my whole life is there. Because I am part Dominican, and I also consider me part Puerto Rican, but I represent myself to be from New York. That's part of my life and I'll never forget it. Every time I go back there, I feel like 'yeah, this is home.' … When I moved to the South Bronx, it was Black people, Jamaican people, you know, there we were all together … I think Dominicans and Puerto Ricans got along better than here, because there they were all immigrants. In the U.S. you see people of all places, so they are used to that." When Cristina moved back to Santurce, the thing she missed the most was "having a group of Latin peoples like I used to do in New York … When you migrate from another country, you have to establish yourself to those rules, you know? [When I returned to Puerto Rico] they saw me as a Black girl coming from New York."

Central to Cristina's remarks are her memories of anti-Dominican prejudice in Puerto Rico and oftentimes tense relationships between Dominicans and Puerto Ricans in the U.S. (Duany 1994) This forms part of Cristina's own "cognitive baggage" (Bloch 1992; McCallum 2005) – that is, the practices which structure apprehension of social difference and that subjects bring to and take away from social interactions and remember in other contexts. These memories of significant events are embodied as racial knowledge that may or may not shape present-time interactions for Cristina, but which continued to define her own affective experience.

The emotional epistemology through which the young people with whom I spoke in Belo Horizonte and Santurce emphasized the connection between "Americanization" and Blackness was thus mediated through a perceived negative affect attributed to returned migrants. According to this emotional epistemology, returned migrants were withdrawn, somber and depressed as a result of encountering "real racism" in the U.S. and embracing the impact of this racism affectively. For return migrants like Cristina, however, the phenomenological experience of the migration process was quite different and they often disdained their own integration into both host *and* homeland countries. For them affect appeared as a stance for social critique.

While challenging ideas of immigrant passivity and backwardness, the transformation from "happy immigrant" to "depressed minority" unfolded in alignment with the material exigencies of urban neoliberalism and the creation of productive workers and consumers. Developing an appropriate emotional style – the one that strikes the body knowledge and balance to navigate a racialized Americanization and market expectations – was related to the capacity of being attuned to the emotional needs of the market. Thus an internal emotional alignment (Bourdieu's habitus and Merleau-Ponty's perception (Merleau-Ponty 1962)) in everyday social contexts was imperative to the process by which working-class youth of color were tacitly required to perform a great deal of emotional labor (Hochschild 1983) in the low-end service sector jobs for which they were destined under neoliberalism. In a predominantly Black city like Newark, this urban "emotional regime" (Reddy 1997) required that Latinos manifested negative affect as evidence of no longer being an "immigrant," while still avoiding an over-identification with African Americans. This was a process of holding on to marketable expressions of affect. In this sense, the racial projects of the U.S. nation-state were always-already projects of controlling the emotions of subordinate populations, of disciplining into racial subjectivity not only in the official realm of political institutions, but in the regulation of the most intimate, visceral, phenomenological quotidian forms of existence.

## Neoliberal-Friendly Emotive Subjects: Embodying Affective Labor and "Doing Blackness Right"

*"Se busca mesera con buena presencia [Seeking waitress with good appearance]"*
(Handwritten sign on the windows of an Ecuadoran restaurant in Newark, NJ)

The inscription upon certain bodies of disciplines of self-control, particularly affective control, and practices of group discipline are often tied up with the interests of state and the market (Appadurai 1996: 198; Hochschild 1983). Situating affect in state construction of racial subjects is an element of a social ethos that has to be critical to any anthropological theorizing of the body. Conceiving the body as an interpretive framework of culture or focusing on a symbols and meanings approach to intimate and social worlds cannot fully capture the powerful analytic framework of state and political realities. State construction of racial subject takes place not only in traditional political institutions, but through everyday processes of learning how race operates and appropriate expression of sentiments and emotion. Transnational migrants approached domestic U.S. minorities and the process of becoming U.S. racialized subjects themselves with trepidation (Waters 1999). They found themselves subscribing to emotional styles that allowed both a display of urban competency and an alignment with market demands for a particular form of emotional labor (Hochschild 1983). "*Buena presencia*," while indexing particular class and race locations, also suggests that a good worker in the U.S. is someone who possesses the fine-tuned, calibrated emotional style that navigated "docility" and nonagressiveness, while also embracing cosmopolitanism and savvyness. This is the emotional style that would appeal to the affluent suburban and metropolitan Whites to whom the "Newark Renaissance," in all its focus on cultural events, ethnic cuisine, and high-culture performances, aimed to attract during the years of my fieldwork. In this sense, states and

market orchestrate racial projects through the regulation (and induced self-regulation) of affect and come to constitute a politics of embodied racialized affect.

Hinted throughout this essay is the idea that state and market interests generate tacit, indirect mechanisms or affective meta-sentiments (Myers 1986) that go, in most instances, largely unacknowledged in everyday racial encounters and in expressions of public feelings. Many scholars have considered the impact of the rise of capitalism (and neoliberalism) – particularly on what capitalism requires of labor – on changes in emotional styles and sensibilities (Elias 1982 [1939]; Hirschman 1977; Hume 1739; Illouz 2007; Weber [1904–5] 1958). The control of feelings has increased across historical time and has experienced qualitative alterations across emotional regimes (Reddy 1997). Capitalism produces a particular sentimentality and affect that govern social life and interactions; indeed, significant emotional work is done through capitalism (Hirschman 1977; Weber [1904–5] 1958; Williams 1977). An embodied anthropology, therefore, ought to remain vigilant to the degree of accord in the nature of affective communication among multiple states and political sources – what has been termed meta-sentiment (Myers 1986), emotional regime (Reddy 1997), or emotional capitalism (Illouz 2007) – and how these forms of affect sediment competing counter-discourses of race and racial difference in quotidian practices.

Raymond Williams coined the term "structure of feelings" to describe the interpretative strategies that produce meaning and values as they are actively lived and felt and exist at the "edge of semantic availability" (1977: 134), and which are often not located within a formalized, classified institutional formation. Structures of feeling are a kind of sentiment and thinking which is social and material, but in an embryonic phase before it is fully articulated and defined; they are defined by the ways in which they actively produce and regulate particular impulses, restraints, and tone in structured sets that concern "specific feelings, specific rhythms … particular linkages, particular emphases and suppressions" (1977: 133–34). Unlike categories like ideology or world view, structures of feeling are less codified and formal and can be more easily assigned to different social groups and classes). In this chapter, I have identified a structure of feelings that is interpreted through emotional epistemologies in multiple local and transnational locations and which organizes the interactions among migrants, U.S. minorities, and the durability of White privilege in majority-minority urban areas. This resonates with Bourdieu's conception of structuring structures (1977, 1990, 1998), because in practice they are all lived experiences that change not according to rigid parameters or static categories, but in relation to how individuals see themselves, the world around them, the spaces they occupy, and the people and institutions with whom they interact in visceral, phenomenological ways. Contextualized in this way, communications include symbolic acts and practices – such as readings of "depression," dress style and mannerisms – that establish a particular affective tone.

In the case of Newark, a predominantly Black city, Whiteness operates by disciplining poor and working-class migrants of color, particularly Latinos, to carve a space as a distinct kind of minority, one that cannot attain the privileges of White Americans, but also cannot cultivate a solidarity with African Americans. While being an "immigrant" is a bad thing, being the wrong kind of minority is oftentimes worse, causing great anxiety of not "getting it right" and experiencing anticipatory disorientation. Many Latin American migrants and U.S.-born Latinos have engaged in a process of "doing Blackness right," as part of an embodied racial learning and in response to visceral

and structural aspects of their affective worlds and reflection on that world. "Doing Blackness right" involved overlooking similarities with African Americans in terms of residential segregation, occupational and educational neglect by the state, and equivalent degrees of economic and political marginality, while emphasizing distinctions in affect or psychological makeup. It was the work of a creative imagination, of struggling and creating oneself with and against the limits of neoliberal desires. This is the ultimate way of creating suitable workers from a racialization project that involves controlling affect and naturalizing rules of emotive display.

The socialization of body and emotions, on which the process of racial learning is premised, operates to make some individuals more vulnerable to the effects of emotional dissonance, suppression, and display rules that are aligned with market needs for an emotional labor-dependent entry-level labor market (Syed 2008: 192). "Doing Blackness right" requires a calibration of knowledge that dictates the kinds and limits of the embodiment of a racialized affect; this entails the capacity to know and know what not to know, simultaneously, and in multiple (seemingly contradictory) contexts like the streets of "inner-city" neighborhoods, the market, school, or country of origin. It involved making a palatable copy of an otherwise "defective" Blackness, so that Blackness among Latin Americans and Latinos was emblematic of Americanization in a neoliberally friendly, cosmopolitan way. Indeed, this process of racial experimentation was central to the constitution of a neoliberally-friendly racialized subject. The process of "doing Blackness right" is a critical aspect of the transformation of the body physical through physical labor and productivity / capital accumulation that Marx and Engels describe in *The Communist Manifesto*. While frequently perceived as counter-hegemonic, when deployed in an emotionally adequate way, such sub-cultures do not spirit its participants away from conventional forms of social participation, but quite the contrary; "making Blackness right" in fact was used to consolidate, not devalue individual's cultural capital (cf. Wilkins 2008: 35). Some Latin American migrant youth could continue to pursue the traits associated with a U.S. "immigrant tale" under a precisely executed urban cosmopolitanism cloak, by becoming experts in the community norms of appropriate emotional displays.

In my ethnographic work among Latin American and U.S.-born Latino youth in Newark I found that some of these young people had developed keen interpretive and observational tactics to selectively deployed Blackness as cultural practice; they had in fact become, "street therapists" (Ramos-Zayas n.d.) who filtered their analyses of race in the U.S. from an imagined or experiential memory of what race in their countries of origin "felt like."

In a conversation with Giselle, Favíola, and Emília, the three Brazilian students undermined denunciation of Black oppression by Black and Puerto Rican students, by drawing comparisons that accentuated the presumption of racial democracy in Brazil. Giselle asked disapprovingly: "Why do Blacks here have to complain so much about racism? Racism, racism, racism, that's all they talk about! In Brazil that's not important. Everybody gets along. We don't have to be talking about race and this and that, you know? You have friends of all groups, real friends, like family, because they do things that you like to do, not because they're Black or White… or anything." Favíola and Emília emphatically agreed: "Everybody is mixed there!" Not surprisingly, many of the Brazilian migrant students, particularly the women who had greater access to a process of self-marketing, were divided about their interest in exploring American-ness through

Blackness. Nevertheless, they almost always rejected civil rights and racial struggles. From a slightly different perspective, but also rejecting U.S. racial categories, particularly "Hispanic," Pedro, an Uruguayan student who arrived in the U.S. two years prior to our talk, commented: "I don't come here thinking that I'm less than them [White Americans]. I don't come thinking that they are superior. In that sense I'm different from some of the people here. I mean, there are times that I'm like 'Yeah, Hispanics!' [with pride] and I feel good when someone achieves things and he's a Hispanic. But I'm just me, an individual, you know." An assumption behind these comments is that African Americans were excessively "resentful" of their subordination. "Resentment," or at least its articulation, is viewed as a choice one makes based on an implicit emotional capacity. Brazilians, in particular, but many other Latin American migrants as well, insisted that a main difference between "immigrants" and African Americans was that African Americans were "resentful" – in most of the interviews resentment was defined in light of verbally or politically denouncing discrimination and subordination. These perspectives on "resentment" assumed an emotional or psychological weakness.

A focus on negative affect and the imposition of psychiatric labels coexisted and oftentimes collided with notions of "fake" and insincerity, or not being real. While sometimes associated with urban cosmopolitanism, such form of emotional darkness was cultural capital only when it was deployed very selectively, so that it did not interfered with a service sector labor market that required a "good disposition" or "Buena presencia" in its hiring practices. Embracing dark emotional styles meant sincerity (one is not fake happy), but also it came at a cost if one did not take context and situation – and hierarchical expectations of respectability – into account, a process which in itself caused significant personal dissonance. This also suggested a disdain for emotional styles that challenged U.S. conventions of "good disposition"; painful feelings were directed toward forms of self-knowledge in the new context of racial learning, not toward a denunciation of social dysfunction. Some of these forms sustained a dominant cultural capital, as "race" was turned into creativity, artistic displays, and intellectual aesthetics in one's countries of origin. The culturalization of Blackness was instrumental in endorsing the belief that there were multiple and fluid (albeit hierarchically ranked) forms of Blackness, and that the status of "immigrant" or being from another country ranked a person higher, regardless of race, on the scale of desirability and marketability than being American Black. These perspectives on Blackness as "culture" diffused "race"; racism as a system of power and subordination frequently drew from transnational understandings of how "race" was engaged (or not) in Latin American countries and U.S. Latino communities.

Perspectives on "resentment," while most commonly attributed to African Americans, also characterized the distinctions made between U.S.-born and "immigrant" in Newark. For instance, Javier Otero, a young Puerto Rican man who had graduated from Barringer High School and lived in North Broadway, explained:

> I think we in this society have cast that [distinction between U.S.-born versus "immigrant"] out. The last one in has always been the one you don't want, whether they be Italian, Irish, or Eastern … Polack. I think the African American probably has all the emotions that you can expect [them to have]. I mean, you know, [they may think] "We worked hard to get this, this may be the bottom of the barrel, but it's our barrel." So they see Puerto Ricans, and they see people getting their barrel, and they don't think we have fought for it, which is not true, but they think that.

Interestingly, Javier further added: "For Blacks here, you're either Black or you're White. They don't know what to do with us [Puerto Ricans], so it's more like 'If you're not Black, then you're White.' I think they see us as sort of White, even if we're dark or look darker than the Whites. We're still not Black. Whatever we are, we're stealing what they fought for, in their eyes, so they resent us for that. We got the easy ride."

Learning these forms of emotional and linguistic self-management was critical in establishing new patterns of social recognition and differentiation in Newark. This was particularly the case when one's identity had been premised on the belief that racial talk is "impolite" and what generates racism in the first place, as was the case for many Latin American migrants who still subscribed to ideologies akin to racial democracy (Goldstein 1999; Sheriff 2001). Limited embodiment was facilitated by a cartography of racial democracy that provided Latin American migrants and even some U.S.-born Latinos with the possibility of inhabiting multiple systems of racial difference at once.

## Final Remarks and Further Reflections

In this chapter, I have examined the intersection of racialization, affect, and the anthropology of the body, by focusing on the nexus between Americanization, racialization and re-racialization practices, and negative affect among Brazilian and Puerto Rican youth in Newark, Belo Horizonte, and Santurce. While these domestic and transnational spaces provided an emotional epistemology to render subjects affectively legible, a question that remains central to this discussion is: How do those very subjects experience, viscerally, their affect in light of these racialization practices? Moreover, in the case of an Americanization that is equated with Blackness and urban competency, how does "being ghetto" or "acting hard" really *feel* and to what degree does the expression of affect suggests individual agency versus spontaneity?

I want to return to Emília Ribeiro, the Brazilian student who first commented on a peer's depression, as well as to Ricky Acosta, a Puerto Rican student who remembered how he used to try to "act hard" when he first arrived at the Newark high school where I met him. As is sometimes the case, Emília's assessment of Roberto, the Ecuadorian peer who tried to "act hard," as "depressed" was never far from Emília's own personal history. As Emília once explained in relation to her own Americanization, when she first arrived in the U.S., she developed a serious depression that was manifested as an eating disorder. Descriptions of developing eating disorders and weight related issues were surprisingly common among Brazilian migrants in Newark, and were often reflective of a "somatic mode of attention" to the body (Csordas 1983). To alleviate her depression, Emília began going to clubs while still being underage, and flirted with various jobs in a budding Newark sex industry (Ramos-Zayas 2009). Likewise, Ricky Acosta was one of the Puerto Rican students whom others viewed as "trying to act hard" or "be ghetto." He himself acknowledges that: "I wanted to play tough, be quote-unquote ghetto. A little bit to scare the White kids. But then I met the people who are my friends now. We're more mature now. We have jobs, we want to move out of Newark and do something for ourselves." As I got to know Ricky better, he explained that having a "ghetto style" somewhat alleviated the prejudice to which he may have been subjected because people suspected him to be gay, even before

Ricky "came out" to his closest friends. In Ricky's case, the deployment of a ghetto identity served as a tool to gain a certain respect that eventually laid a more receptive foundation for a more open expression of his sexuality.

What does Emília's subjective appraisal of Robert's "depression" and "acting hard" say about Emília herself? Was Ricky's "acting hard" instrumental or spontaneous or both? Like other "street therapists," Emília and Ricky had personal histories that were inseparable not only from their phenomenological experience of them, but from the specific political economic contexts in which they unfolded. Despite the creativity involved in "making Blackness right," the structural elements in which such a process is ensconced remain: Emília, Ricky, and many of the Newark residents whose voices appear here face the everyday realities of an urban renewal that privileges real estate and corporate interests over the wellbeing of working-class and impoverished subjects, not only in Newark. They face high levels of unemployment or, at best, a service sector employment that requires the suppression of felt emotions and simulation of unfelt ones and which may contradict their very social identities in the goal of producing docile racial bodies.

"Between Two Worlds: How Latino Youths Come of Age in America," a 2009 report from the Pew Hispanic Center, found that Latinos ages 16 to 25 (which include all of the Latino youth in my Newark research) were satisfied with their lives and optimistic about their futures. They valued education, hard work and career success, although they were more likely than other youths to drop out of school, live in poverty and become teen parents. While in 1995, half of Latino youths were "foreign-born," in 2009 only 34 percent are (most of these youths – 37 percent – are U.S.-born). Perceptions of discrimination were more widespread among the U.S.-born (41 percent) than the foreign-born (32 percent). A large majority of Latino youth (76 percent) said that they did not see themselves fitting into the race framework of the U.S., and only 16 percent of them saw themselves as White.

Ventures into a sphere of racialized "public feelings" (Cvetkovich 2007) are suggestive of how an embodied racialized affect emerges from the managing of sentiment and emotions in the public sphere and how neoliberalism has dialectically sustained and being sustained on affective grounds. Examining affect in its alignment to the aspirations of urban neoliberalism allows us to analyze the impact of the market and class interests (the consolidation of neoliberalism at its best) on changes in cognitive style and sensibility. It foreshadows the impact of capital on people's intimate, phenomenological experience of the material environment.

## REFERENCES

Appadurai, Arjun, 1996 Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Bloch, Maurice, 1992 What Goes without Saying. *In* Conceptualizing Society. Adam Kuper, ed. pp. 127–146. London: Routledge.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1977 Outline of a Theory of Practice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1990 The Logic of Practice. Cambridge: Polity.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1998 Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action. Cambridge: Polity.

Burr, J, and Chapman, T., 2004 Contextualising Experiences of Depression in Women from South Asian Communities: A Discursive Approach. Sociology of Health and Illness 26: 433–452.

Crapanzano, Vincent, 2004 Imaginative Horizon: An Essay in Literary-Philosophical Anthropology. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Csordas, Thomas, 1983 The Rhetoric of Transformation in Ritual Healing. Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry 7: 333–375.
Csordas, Thomas, 1990 Embodiment as a Paradigm for Anthropology. Ethos 18: 5–47.
Cvetkovich, Ann, 2007 Public Feelings. South Atlantic Quarterly 106(3) Summer 2007: 459–468.
De Genova, Nicholas and Ramos-Zayas, Ana Y., 2003 Latino Crossings: Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and the Politics of Race and Citizenship. New York: Routledge.
Duany, Jorge, 1994 Quisqueya in the Hudson: The Transnational Identity of Dominicans in Washington Heights. Research Monograph. New York: The CUNY Dominican Studies Institute.
Elias, Norbert, 1982 [1939] The Civilizing Process, vol. II Power and Civility. pp. 229–333. New York: Pantheon.
Forman, Murray, 2002 The 'Hood Comes First: Race, Space, and Place in Rap and Hip-Hop. Middletown CT: Wesleyan University Press.
Foucault, Michel, 1977 Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, Allan Sheridan, trans. New York: Vintage.
Freyre, Gilberto 1933/1995 Casa-grande e senzala: formação da família brasileira 1995 sob o regime da economia patriarcal. 30a ed. Rio de Janeiro: Record.
Goldstein, Donna, 1999 "Interracial" Sex and Racial Democracy in Brazil: Twin Concepts? American Anthropologist 101(3): 563–578.
Habermas, Jurgen, 1994 Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
Haskell, Thomas, 1985 Capitalism and the Origins of the Humanitarian Sensibility. American Historical Review 90(2): 339–361; 90(3): 547–66.
Hirschman, Albert, 1977 The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph. pp. 9–66. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Hochschild, Arlie, 1983 The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Honig, Bonnie, 2001 Democracy and the Foreigner. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Hume, David, 1739 Of Compassion [and Pity]. A Treatise of Human Nature, pp. 368–89; and Of Pride and Humility: A Treatise of Human Nature, Part I, Of the Passions, Book II, pp. 275–324.
Illouz, Eva, 2007 Cold Intimacies: The Making of Emotional Capitalism. Chapter 1, The Rise of Homo Sentimentalis. pp. 1–39. Cambridge: Polity.
Jackson, John, 2006 Real Black: Adventures in Racial Authenticity. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Jenkins, Janis, 1991 The State Construction of Affect: Political Ethos and Mental Health among Salvadoran Refugees. Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry 15: 139–165.
Johnson, Patrick, 2003 Appropriating Blackness: Performance and the Politics of Authenticity. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Kocieniewski, David, 2006a Newark Ex-Mayor's Deals Stir Questions. The New York Times, July 30, 2006. http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/30/nyregion/30newark.html, accessed November 2, 2010.
Kocieniewski, David, 2006b A New Mayor Tests His Promises on Newark's Harsh Reality. The New York Times, October 19, 2006. http://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/19/nyregion/19newark.html, accessed November 2, 2010.
Kotchemidova, Christina, 2005 From Good Cheer to "Drive-By" Smiling: A Social History of Cheerfulness. Journal of Social History 39(1): 5–37.
Lefebvre, Henri, 1991 [1974] The Production of Space. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
Lyon, Margot L., 1995 Missing Emotion: The Limitations of Cultural Constructionism in the Study of Emotion. Cultural Anthropology 10: 244–263.

McCallum, Cecilia, 2005 Racialized Bodies, Naturalized Classes: Moving Through the City of Salvador da Bahía. American Ethnologist, 32(1): 100–117.

Merleau-Ponty, M., 1962 The Phenomenology of Perception, C. Smith trans. London: Routledge.

Myers, Fred, 1986 Pintupi Country, Pintupi Self: Sentiment, Place, and Politics among Western Desert Aborigines. Washington DC: Smithsonian Institute Press.

Newman, Kathe, 2004 Newark, Decline and Avoidance, Resistance and Desire: From Disinvestment to Reinvestment. Annals of the AAPSS 594(1): 34–48.

Omi, Michael and Howard Winant, 1986 Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960's to the 1980's. New York: Routledge.

Pew Hispanic Center, 2009 Between Two Worlds: How Young Latinos Come of Age in America. Washington DC: Pew Hispanic Center.

Pierre, Jemima. 2004. Black Immigrants in the United States and the Cultural Narratives of Ethnicity. Identities 11: 141–170.

Pinho, Patricia de Santana, 2005 Tanking the United States Off the Center in Studies on Negritude in Brazil. Revista brasileira das Ciencias. Sociais [online]. 20(59): 37–50.

Ramos-Zayas, Ana Y., 2003 National Performances: Class, Race, and Space in Puerto Rican Chicago. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Ramos-Zayas, Ana Y., 2007 Becoming American, Performing Blackness?: Cultural Competency, Racialized Spaces, and the Politics of Citizenship among Brazilian and Puerto Rican Youth in Newark. Identities 14(1): 85–110.

Ramos-Zayas, Ana Y., 2008 Between "Cultural Excess" and Racial "Invisibility": Brazilians and the Commercialization of Culture in the Ironbound. *In* Becoming Brazuca: Brazilian Immigration to the United States. Leticia Braga and Clemence Jouet eds. Chapter 11. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Ramos-Zayas, Ana Y., 2009 Stereotypes of the Tropics in "Portuguese Newark": Brazilian Women, Urban Erotics, and the Phantom of Blackness. *In* Luso-Portuguese in the U.S.: Community, Culture, and the Making of Identity. Kim Holton and Andrea Klimt eds. Chapter 17, pp. 429–456. Dartmouth: Center of Portuguese Studies and Culture, University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth.

Ramos-Zayas, Ana Y., n.d. Street Therapists: Race, Affect, and Neoliberal Personhood in Latino Newark.

Reddy, William, 1997 Against Constructionism: The Historical Ethnography of Emotions. Current Anthropology 38: 327–351.

Scott, James, 1992 Domination and the Arts of Resistance. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Sheriff, Robin, 2001 Dreaming Equality: Color, Race, and Racism in Urban Brazil. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Stoler, Ann Laura, 2009 Habits of a Colonial Heart. *In* Along the Archival Grain, Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense. pp. 57–102. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Syed, Jawad, 2008 Employment Prospects for Skilled Migrants: A Relational Perspective. Human Resource Management Review 18(1): 28–45.

Telles, Edward, 2004 Race in Another America: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Waters, Mary, 1999 Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Weber, Max, [1904–5] 1958 The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. pp. 47–78. London Routledge.

Wilkins, Amy, 2008 Wannabes, Goths, and Christians: The Boundaries of Sex, Style, and Status. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Williams, Raymond, 1977 Structures of Feeling. *In* Marxism and Literature. pp. 128–35. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

CHAPTER 3

# AUTOETHNOGRAPHY
## *When I Was A Girl (Notes on Contrivance)*

*Roger N. Lancaster*

### Introduction

Autoethnography is an embodied practice: it is ethnographic investigation that takes autoreflective perceptions of the world as the starting point for generalizations and theorizations about the cultural, the social, and the political (Lancaster 2011; Ellis 2004). As phenomenological inquiry, it turns to lived experience in a deeply reflective way to bracket "the taken-for-granted meanings" of an ethnographer's life and self (Sotirin 2010).

Reducible neither to autobiography nor fiction, autoethnography shares elements with both. Although autoethnography describes an individual's own experiences and often uses the conventions of literary writing and expression, it is first and foremost a cultural accounting (Ellis 2004: xix) and its "proper subject is the social world around the writer, as evinced in the writer's experiences (and sometimes beliefs), not the writer himself" (Lancaster 2011: 253). Through foregrounding personal experience and story as meaning-making enterprises, autoethnographers ask their readers "to become coparticipants [in their stories], engaging the storyline morally, emotionally, aesthetically, and intellectually" (Ellis and Bochner 2000: 745), producing an embodied experience of reading that often forges intimate, sensual contact between readers and texts (Jones 2005). At the same time, the autoethnographer uses the narrator as an inscribed figure within the text to signal the fictive nature of cultural accounts, calling into question ethnographic authority (Russell 1999). By implicating his or her personal story within larger social formations, historical processes, and academic discourses, the autoethnographer's account moves fluidly amid

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

embodied experience, the "vulnerable self," the social, and the theoretical (Ellis 2004: 37). Autoethnography was developed primarily by sociologists and anthropologists in the last few decades, foremost among them, Carolyn Ellis writing alone (1995 and 2004) and in collaboration with Ruth Behar (1997), Art Bochner (2000), Norman Denzin (1997), Ron Pelias (2004), Deborah Reed-Danahay (1997) and Laurel Richardson (1997).

In anthropology in particular, autoethnography as a form of cultural inquiry, genre of representation, and embodied practice is tied to a number of shifts that occurred within the discipline in the last part of the 20th century, among them the recognition that ethnography is a blurred genre of writing containing elements of memoir and of fiction and yet is neither and the growing awareness of the significance of embodied and sensory knowledge, and of emotion and affect, to the ethnographic enterprise. Perhaps most significant in its development was the increasing epistemological doubt about the ethnographic project that dominated discussion in the field in the 1980s.

In 1979, cultural anthropologist David Hayano argued that as anthropologists moved out of the colonial era of ethnography, they would come more and more to study the social worlds and subcultures of which they were a part (Anderson 2006). The recognition of the imbrication of anthropology in colonialist projects was one of the precipitating forces behind the eruption of the "crisis of representation" that pervaded the discipline in the 1980s. More and more anthropologists came to acknowledge that ethnography is not an innocent practice, that positivist approaches and writing conventions inscribe power in the text, and that "all research interests come out of our own narratives of experience and shape our narrative inquiries" (Clandinin and Connelly 2000: 121).

For many anthropologists concerned with the politics and poetics of "writing culture" – whether feminist, post-colonial, postmodernist, or LGBT – autoethnographic techniques were, and remain today, a tool of cultural criticism, a means to respond both to how power operates within traditional fieldwork and realist forms of ethnographic representation and a way to challenge monolithic views of identity.

Whether cultural accounts written by members of societies once themselves the objects of ethnographic study, autobiographical writings by members of ethnic minorities, or reflexive ethnographies filled with autobiographical information written by anthropologists (Reed-Danahay 1997), autoethnographic accounts address some of the issues of power inherent in ethnographic representation through collapsing "the categories of native and non-native, subject and object, researcher and subject of study" and the personal and public (Motzafi-Haller 1997: 219). In anthropology today, autoethnographic techniques have become more or less conventional, "whether through the placement of the author in the text by writing in the first person in the ethnographic narrative; reflection on how points of biography have shaped the author's research questions; or queries about how one's positioning as a social subject affects both the interpretation and shaping of data" (Lancaster 2011: 253).

Yet, autoethnography is also contested terrain. On the one hand, some authors call for an "evocative" autoethnography, characterized by introspective inquiry into the emotional depths of personal experience (Sorotin 2010). On the other hand, other scholars call for a more "analytic autoethnography," one that emphasizes "systematic ethnographic methods, analytic reflexivity, and theoretical understandings of broad social phenomena" (Sotirin 2010, cf. Anderson 2006). "When I was a Girl" – which

is "about" embodied experiences of gender, race, sexuality, identity, performance, kinship, and community – uses elements of both, but emphasizes the use of stories as empirical evidence, as ethnographic material to be productively examined. It uses autoethnography in much the same manner that classical ethnography uses the technique of participant observation: to give a description of events, conversations, and actions "on the ground" because they reveal something of the texture of events (Lancaster 2011: 104). It neither dwells on telling readers how the author feels nor supplies them with the author's own interior states as evidence; instead, in line with autoethnography as embodied experience, it performs what Sotirin calls the *radical specificity* of living a life, evoking the indeterminacy and contingencies of life experienced "in the flows, multiplicities, and provisionality" of particular moments and events (Sotirin 2010).

"When I was a Girl" not only evokes this indeterminacy and contingency, but also theorizes it, invoking Merleau-Ponty's insights about style to do so: that it is not "something superficial, something added onto a pre-existing reality," but is instead "essential to the work of perception." "When I was a Girl" enacts multiplicity and provisionality demonstrating that being is "doing, acting, contriving" and that artifice is the nature of humankind. As Lancaster puts it, "originality, transformation, and flux are the essence of our existence," which is always already embodied.

Frances E. Mascia-Lees

## REFERENCES

Anderson, L., 2006 Analytic Autoethnography. Journal of Contemporary Ethnography 35(4): 373–395.

Behar, Ruth, 1996 The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology that Breaks Your Heart. Boston: Beacon.

Clandinin, Jean and F. Michael Connelly, 2000 Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Denzin, Norman K., 1997 Interpretive Ethnography: Ethnographic Practices for the 21st century. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Ellis, Carolyn, 1995 Final Negotiations: A Story of Love and Chronic Illness. Pittsburgh: Temple University Press.

Ellis, Carolyn, 2004 The Ethnographic I: A Methodological Novel about Autoethnography. Walnut Creek: AltaMira.

Ellis, Carolyn and Art Bochner, 2000 Autoethnography, Personal Narrative, Reflexivity: Researcher as Subject. *In* The Handbook of Qualitative Research. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds., 2nd edition. pp. 733–768. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Hayano, David, 1979 Poker Faces: The Life and Work of Professional Card Players. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Jones, S.M., 2005 Autoethnography. *In* The Handbook of Qualitative Research. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds., 3rd edition. pp. 763–792. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Lancaster, Roger, 2011 Sex Panic and the Punitive State. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Motzafi-Haller, Pnina, 1997 Writing Birthright: On Native Anthropologists and the Politics of Representation. *In* Auto / Ethnography: Rewriting the Self and the Social. Deborah Reed-Danahay, ed. pp. 195–223. New York: Berg.

Pelias, Ron, 2004 A Methodology of the Heart: Evoking Academic and Daily Life. Walnut Creek: AltaMira.

Reed-Danahay, Deborah, 1997 Leaving Home: Schooling Stories and the Ethnography of Autoethnography in Rural France. *In* Auto / Ethnography: Rewriting the Self and the Social. Deborah Reed-Danahay, ed. pp. 123–144. New York: Berg.

Richardson, Laurel, 1997 Fields of Play: Constructing an Academic Life. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Russell, Catherine, 1999 Experimental Ethnography: The Work of Film in the Age of Video. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Sotirin, Patty 2010 Autoethnographic Mother-Writing: Advocating Radical Specificity. Journal of Research Practice 6(1): (http: / / jrp.icaap.org / index.php / jrp / article / viewArticle / 220 / 189), accessed 3 November 2010.

## When I Was A Girl (Notes on Contrivance)

> *"Life is always poised for flight. From a distance, it looks still… but up close it is flitting this way and that, as if displaying to the world its perpetual readiness to take off in any of a thousand directions."*
>
> (Jonathan Weiner, *The Beak of the Finch: A Story of Evolution in Our Time*)

### Prologue

Any story, on the condition of its being a story, marks the passage of time. This story belongs to personal time, my time:

When I came out in the late 1970s, I found myself keeping company with an increasingly definable group of other young gay men. Some had been having sex with males since junior high school while others were experiencing same-sex relationships for the first time, but what was new for all of us was a sense of gay identity and the world it opens up – those manifold transformations of self and connection that happen when you declare (not only to yourself but also to others): "I am gay." Initiates to the gay life, we passed around stories, pooled experiences, and in the process learned from each other.

Underclassmen at a large public Southern university, we were living away from home for the first time. Some were living comfortably, with parental support, financial aid, or semi-regular jobs; others had been disowned by our parents, and were struggling to live and study independently. In this context, my first sense of gay community was very concrete: resources were variously lent, given, or shared among us. Somehow, in the shuffle, if the poor were resourceful, clever, and – above all else – *entertaining*, then even they would always have enough to eat and (what actually seemed more important at the time) could go to a bar several times a week. It would not be correct to say, simply, that we went to bars. We lived in bars, we haunted bars, we were *of* bars; life was a barroom tableau, wittily narrated by participant-observers.

### Faultlines

All was not euphonious in our little community. A shared identity scarcely implies an identity of interests, and the most mundane events disclosed structural divisions among us: social, political, and material conflicts not easily resolved. Circumstances

stratified us, transactions sorted us, and beliefs divided us. For example, something very like a "class situation" saturated our everyday interactions without quite becoming fixed as a determinate hierarchy. I was among the disowned and indigent, and came to resent charity – free meals, free rides, gift admissions to bars – as much as I relied on these gestures of unequal friendship. No doubt my patrons likewise resented my perpetual dependency, a resentment detectable in sidewise glances or the sudden dropping of a subject (like the evening's planned excursion) in my presence.

Racial divisions proved no less salient for us than for society at large. A minority of our members were African Americans, and it was always an open question whether they would be admitted to the mostly white gay bars and discotheques we frequented. These bars had informal policies limiting the number of blacks they admitted. If "too many" showed up on any given night (this is the way the bars' owners spoke of their practice, when questioned), the doorman would turn them away, telling them that the bar was already filled to capacity. As a group, then, we resorted to easing our black friends in, individually, amidst large clusters of whites. But even in such acts of solidarity, racial privileges could not simply be evaded or disowned – and the racist attitudes of some of our members contributed to tensions inside our group.

In the process of our endless, flowing discussions, we argued about religion. Some of our members were Catholic, some were mainline Protestant, quite a few were evangelical fundamentalists, a couple were Jewish, and others were secular. (As an atheist, I could argue with everyone.) We also argued over politics. Among our group's members were not just liberal Democrats and centrist Independents but also a surprising number of conservative Republicans. (As a socialist, once again, I could argue with everyone.)

We expended a great deal of effort arguing over questions that, in retrospect, might seem less than productive but which at the time seemed the most serious and certainly generated the most passion. I still recall an especially raucous quarrel over what did or did not constitute "gay music." It lasted for several days, no doubt because it touched on deeper questions of self-definition and identity-work. No one bought my argument that punk was the gay music of our era: the only musical genre specifically named as homosexual. Some took the functionalist position that gay music was, by definition, whatever got played at gay clubs: disco. Others pointed out that disco had not always existed and – fuel to the fire – would not always exist. (I still remember the resounding retort, announced with the air of an historical trump: "Disco is here to stay.") At any rate, since the same music got played at straight clubs, especially straight black clubs, then "gay music" was music that had to be heard with a certain ear – that is, it was music *intended*, coded, for gay listeners. (Imagine my astonishment when Bob Dylan's "Just Like A Woman" – aired for years on rural FM rock radio stations – was revealed to be a not-very-discreet ode to the singer's transvestite lover.) A few insisted that music was music, and thus universal, but that in the listening one could make of it whatever one pleased. And if so for music, what about everything else? In our untutored way we thus stumbled into a recurring problem of lesbian and gay scholarship – a question pointedly posed by the title of Leo Bersani's (2010: 31–35) essay, "Is There a Gay Art?"

Perhaps especially, sexual politics divided us. Two of our members were straight women,[1] and one was a lesbian; each of them was dubbed an "honorary gay man," and each was exposed on more than one occasion to casual and unreflective misogyny. There was surprisingly little agreement even on how to understand and act on what

might seem the pivot of our existence, gay self-interest. Only a distinct minority of our clique was ever committed to any conception of gay activism, and some were decidedly opposed to the politicization of homosexuality. "You're only going to make matters worse for everybody," I was sometimes told; "Sex doesn't belong in politics – Why do you want to mix them up?" That these anti-political sentiments were so often expressed by the most extravagant, flamboyant, and stereotypically visible of my friends was a coincidence that never ceased to baffle me, but which now makes a certain sense.

Perhaps most sharply of all, we fought over the inevitable: relationships – improper flirtations, stolen boyfriends, un-repaid loans, personal treacheries. Yet somehow, in spite of our differences and conflicts, we were bound together for a time. We were united, as only the young can be, in the shock and exhilaration of coming out –

## Communitas

– Or were we? Everyone wants identity and identification to function as a kind of homecoming, and home as a warm hearth, closed off to the weather, safe and comfy inside. Anything that disturbs the peace will be deemed an intrusion, an exception. But these questions can be thought differently if we begin not with the functionalist notion that social life is essentially about the establishment of rules, norms, and agreements but with the Marxist notion that social life is first of all a squabble, or the existentialist insight that human existence is volatile and ambiguous.

And so I say "in spite of" and "united" here with the same reservation that I say "I" in recounting what across the opacity of time now seems like another life, a life perched at the crux of endless possibilities. For once it is seen that no human relationship can be entirely free of contention, and once it is admitted that the work of identity is never finished – that "I can never say 'I' absolutely," as Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962: 208) put it in advance of any notion called deconstruction – then it might also be said that conflict, contradiction, and ambivalence were inherent in the nature of our collective project; that even as we secured an identity, we undid it; that whatever community we fashioned was not formed "in spite of" but quite literally in and through these conflicts, slippages, and ambiguities. At the very heart of our shared name was a core of equivocation, contradiction, and flux.

And even the straight women, having thrown in their lot with gay men, were fellow travelers on this journey of I-dentity and its discontents.

## Families We Make

> *"Each individual… constructs for himself a succession of little dramas in which he is the principal character. No one escapes the constant necessity of dressing himself in a series of different uniforms or silk hats, and watching himself go by."*
>
> (Thurman Arnold, *The Symbols of Government*)

I do not really know quite how it happened. Such practices seem to get passed along by word of mouth, but it seemed to me at the time that all this happened spontaneously: We began calling ourselves "family." Doesn't everyone in our situation do something like this?

What began as a metaphor or conceit quickly acquired body and substance. We organized under the "matriarchy" of a lively member of the group: a portly man with flushed cheeks and a strong personality who, it so happens, was a returning student, slightly older and more experienced than we were. We were all Mother's "daughters." We called each other "girl." Everyone was given a feminine drag name, and the discursive conventions of transvestism were a regular feature of our interactions.

I do not claim that we *were* drag queens. We were not. Only two members of our family – in excess of thirty or forty at its largest expansion – ever seem to have worn drag on occasions other than Halloween or special costume parties. Charles went through an extended phase of wearing make-up and convinced a few others to try it out, but only one of us was a bona fide transvestite: a cross-dresser who lived, largely in drag, on the male wing of a co-ed dormitory – where, for a time, she contemplated having a sex-change operation. (In modern parlance, I imagine, she would actually be classified a transgendered person, but we were not very savvy about such distinctions in the 1970s, before a dreary mapping of the gay world took hold and one was compelled to choose between "gay" and "transgender.")[2] The rest of us, in the colloquial expression, were just "queens."

Linguistic convention expresses a lived ambivalence. As the etymology might suggest, "queen" and "drag queen" seem to imply a phenomenon's spectrum of manifestations, the former a reduced or less-than-fully-articulated version of the latter. And so for a time, I imagined that this was how the gay world worked, or at any rate, how determinate stages of development tended to unfold through time: One was first a queen, then a flaming queen, then a drag queen. Contrary and complementary phenomena – butch queens, leather queens, tearoom queens – approximated but also fell short of that ideal (though not necessarily desired, or even typical) stage, drag queens.

In their style of being, in their manner of acting, drag queens – mostly older men, who worked the bars and discotheques where we socialized – somehow seemed to show us our essence, if not our future. These fantastic creatures were our heroes and role models: We copied their speech, their gestures, their stage presence. We replicated them, simulating women. We mimicked them in all but dress – and in this sense, transvestic ritual was the style of being we most enthusiastically embraced; it stood as both symbol and synecdoche for a larger gay life: it defined *us* as a group; it was our "badge of identity" (Sontag 2001: 275).

We hung out in bars together – thus, no one ever stood alone at the local gay discotheque on those endless nights of dance, drink, poppers, and laughter. I scarcely need to specify what desperate aloneness could befall those who went to a gay bar without a proper social safety net. We went out to stores, shopping and shoplifting together. Unlike those gays and lesbians whose poverty might impede a good performance, we stole what we needed to project an image. Our perpetual parties were campy, dish-queen affairs – competitions, really, to see who could be more wittily engaged, who could top whom.

And we did not wait, wilting, for public disapproval to catch us by surprise. We sought it out; we engaged it. We assembled "wrecking crews" – the object of which was to "wreck," or wreak havoc upon, anyone we came across. We went on "flaming expeditions," taking our merriment to the general public. In such group scenes, we were as flamboyant as possible: kissing, holding hands, addressing each other in loud

voices with feminine terms. Not coincidentally, we were always seated in the far back room at Shoney's (one of our recurring after-hours haunts, when the bars had closed), to be given excruciatingly slow service. (This was the same treatment the local Shoney's afforded black patrons.) And it was not uncommon for us to be asked to leave the places we visited. We embraced these signs of rejection as medals of honor.

Over time, most of us moved into the same dorm, into sets of conjoining rooms. We dreamed of taking over a large rented house. The typical street greeting for a sister was to let loose a blood-curdling and attention-getting shriek. We were, in our quaint Southern way, "house girls," without any direct knowledge of those gay kinship networks so beautifully captured in Jennie Livingston's *Paris is Burning*, a video portrait of mostly Puerto Rican and black queens living in New York.

## Ed / na's Way

In real life, Edna was Ed, a gangly and unglamorous pockmarked man who worked as a dental secretary. By night, Ed became Edna, a fast-talking, quick-witted creature of pancake makeup, sequined dresses, and large, curving gestures – Or was that her real life? I sat across from Edna in the back of Shoney's late one evening, having watched her slash and devour everyone unwise enough to attempt verbal sparring with her. "You don't say much, do you?" she finally demanded of me. My terror must have shown. And when she realized that I was slow-talking and awkward, she favored me with a solicitude both regal and gentle, and continued to do so for as long as I knew her.

Ed / na gave the first show-stopping performance I ever saw at the Club. In bigger cities, before cosmopolitan audiences, such shtick might not have had such effect. But here, for this audience, at this time, it proved deeply moving. Seated before a mirror to apply make-up, mascara, wig, and gown, Ed became Edna while lip-synching Frank Sinatra: "I Did It My Way." By the end of the performance, not even the stone-butch lesbians at the bar – who, tough but tender, were dressed like an assemblage of Bruce Springsteens, circa 1975 – could hold back their tears.

## Imagined Identities: Exotic Selves, Native Others

> *I borrow myself from others; I create others from my own thoughts. This is no failure to perceive others; it is the perception of others.*
>
> (Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs.*)

In moves that almost seem too contrived, we instrumentalized certain forms of knowledge in order to invent new traditions. Several of our members read Esther Newton's classic ethnography, *Mother Camp*, and worked some of the phrases and routines recorded there into the local repertoire – a feat of transliteration I realized only some years later, when I read the text and recognized various lines, quotes, and bits. One of my favorites: "I'm going to put on my men's clothes and beat you up" (Newton 1979: 101). I am sure that, even as I lean on *Mother Camp*'s ideas today, any number of readers then savored Newton's rich analysis of drag – with its equivocation between male and female, inside and outside, appearance and illusion – and camp, "a philosophy of transformations and incongruity" (Newton 1979: 105), in gay culture.

A number of people circulated copies of *The Queens' Vernacular*, an early lexicon of camp terms and gay phrases, to memorize quaint expressions from bygone homosexual eras: "Mary, it's a fairy!" "Kiss it, Carlotta." "Today's trade is tomorrow's competition." If Newton's treatment of camp as a ritual theater drew on what Micaela di Leonardo (2000: 59) dubs "the ethnographic gambit" (one's own familiar self depicted as an exotic native), Bruce Rodgers's 1972 lexicon opens with a quote from Franz Boas: a gesture that reiterates the link between anthropology and gay self-study, between gay self-fashioning and the dispassionate inspection of strange cultures.

Some of the more bookish sisters read Susan Sontag's "Notes on 'Camp'" (2001: 275–292) to take from it what seemed useful – a practice which meant sometimes working with and sometimes against the grain of Sontag's dispersed arguments. These jottings put several girls on the trail of Oscar Wilde, as Sontag sprinkles her notes with epigrams like: "One should either be a work of art, or wear a work of art," and "To be natural is such a very difficult pose to keep up."

Such were our extracurricular pursuits, but also, if you will, our serious studies. What happened in the classroom seemed decidedly less interesting, and I am certain that it has proved less consequential for many of us. We rummaged through inventories of arcane knowledge and wondrous practices, in search of motifs that might defamiliarize the ordinary and give familiarity to the exotic. Delicious bon mots from Tallulah Bankhead were tossed together with elegantly barbed quotes from Oscar Wilde, giving our banter a hint of world-weary sophistication. But our researches did not stop at the borders of modern Western culture. Our imagination was anthropological in the literal sense of the term. Historical bric-a-brac, ethnographic pastiche, and kitsch aesthetics provided an abundant wardrobe for the staging of everyday personas. In forging identities, we drew on the miscellany of world history and global cultures: mythic Greek hermaphrodites; secret men's cults; homosexual initiation rituals; the cross-dressing Native American *berdache*; occult homosexual conspiracies; the *couvade*, that practice whereby men become "pregnant" and "give birth"; male subincision among Australian aborigines, interpreted as symbolic invagination and menstruation; to say nothing of encrypted sexualities and ambiguous genders in Hollywood movie images and popular music.

We collected these relics of a queer orientalism the way a museum collects artifacts. We studied these images as one might gaze into a mirror. We tried them on, tried them out, as costumes and as conceits. Lovingly and with good humor, we handled these images – which proved "tacky" in every sense of the word: they stuck to us, and we to them.

Endless citation, incantation, improvisation; perpetual posing, imitating, modeling: It was all incorporated into a fabulous sense of the body; it was all part of a routine that might well be called "devotional."[3] In showing us our "essence," those delirious drag queens who performed in the spaces at the center of gay life modeled a plastic body without definite shape or form: an ecstatic body whose appendages traversed geographies, whose parts were interchangeable with other parts, whose fragments floated across histories, whose gestures might connect unsuspected epochs and sites. A body at once unique and universal, particular and general – no, a body global *because* it was so idiosyncratic.

Everything was given the impress of a certain style; everything was stylized. In fashioning ourselves as exotic natives, we styled a world of marvels and wonders.

And how might it work, this constant cycling of "inner" essence and "outer" appearance? What might it mean, to fashion one's own self as an Other, giving flesh and immediacy to well-known dilemmas of the anthropological imaginary? And what might it accomplish, to realize life as an aesthetic question? This is where stories of a different sort begin. These stories, too, will mark the passage of time; they narrate things that exist in the world. But unlike other sorts of accounts, they can be neither true nor false; rather, they offer themselves as explanations to be tested.

## To Fashion, To Camp, To Style

> *"One should either be a work of art, or wear a work of art."*
>
> (Oscar Wilde)

Camp, in its two senses, *styles*. On the one hand, when one camps in the sense of "camping it up," one affects a certain demeanor, strikes a certain pose. This is camp as a manner of acting, as a means of expression. It is camp *performed* or *as* a performance. On the other hand, one can also camp in a transitive sense, finding that very demeanor or manner in previously unsuspected objects, persons, or situations. In this sense, camp is a matter of discerning a form that unites a set of disparate objects. This is camp *perceived*, or *as* perception.[4]

"Style" is a term that could very easily run away with us here. Like "camp," it is so frequently associated with gay men that there is little need to belabor the connection. Its denotations are broad (manner, form, appearance), its connotations are many (including vogue or commercial fashion). Some of the term's associations suggest a "norming" or "normalizing" function, and a few evoke the groove or mark produced in writing or etching by a *stylus*. Thus "style," as an ideal norm, pre-exists its realization as *style*, an expression or performance. In a performance of style, one enacts a given script; in perception of style, one judges a general form to be present in a concrete constellation of characteristics.

Is this, then, how to imagine camp: as normalization – or, alternatively, as a mechanistic appropriation of the signature marks of the regulatory norm, in the name of its undoing? As the association of a preexisting schema with an event? And is this how to understand style, styling, stylization: as the cold impress of a hard instrument on malleable material? As a kind of ossification, which reifies as carnal being what once existed on the plane of ideal abstraction?

Such is the general form, such are the recurring conceits, of those forms of knowledge that would claim the last word, that would have knowledge by denying its very condition in ambiguity, perspective, and flux – which is to say, in the flesh: *Recitation of a script, repetition of a code, reiteration of a rule* … This is not ritual, but rote-work. *Rigidity, fixity, determination* … What a strangely lifeless existence for life. It is as though I saw myself dead.[5]

## Anthropologizing: A How-To Manual

Our manner of bonding was more complex and formalized than those customs described by Kath Weston in her groundbreaking ethnographic overview of gay / lesbian kinship,

*Families We Choose*. Perhaps that is because our invented traditions and rites were so studied. We practiced the art of artifice closely.

Basic anthropological courses on kinship and social organization backgrounded some of our more refined practices. We spoke of an "incest taboo," and practiced a not-too-rigorously-enforced prohibition on sex with "kin." (When this taboo proved inconvenient, it was summarily waived.) "Matrilineality" prevailed as the basic principle of kinship. For purposes of strict accounting, since all consanguineal kin – Mother's Daughters – were "girls," then all affinal kin (boyfriends, lovers, husbands) were "men." Exceptions were made for the straight women and the lesbian, who were "boys," thus Mother's Sons, and whose partners – "women"—were therefore not admitted by marriage into the kin system.

At one point, Ted and Steve, who were taking introductory anthropology, prepared an elaborate kinship chart, tracing All Mother's Kin. This chart was the focus of collective attention over several days, as we quibbled over how to best depict "descent," "birth order," "gender." Then Steve – without telling Ted, and much to the latter's annoyance – attempted to execute a 3-D kinship model using wire coat-hangers and plastic geometric figures: a representation that would somehow capture not only current relationships but also "divorces." But this proved a hopeless task, and the result, as Ted gloated, was a preposterous-looking, rigid contraption.

Consistency implied, of course, butch / femme relationships, and couples were thus divided into "husbands" and "wives." These classifications implied innumerable difficulties. For one thing, social roles did not necessarily translate into sexual positions. A "butch" might very well be a "bottom," a "femme" a "top." For another, not all of Mother's Daughters conformed to "femme" personae. Finally, a "wife" in one relationship might well be the "husband" in the next one. Family gossip made all these finer points quite public; we kept close track of such rule-conforming and rule-breaking behavior, feigning horror at lapses in "sex roles," violations of the "incest taboo," or occasional "homosexual" (read *heterosexual*) relationships. Sometimes, this all became confusing – one had to follow, not just the standard inversions of gender, role, and relationship, but also the frequent lapses into those extra-systematic systems of reference that constrained and conditioned our references.

## On the Pretend Nature of Playful Practices

Our youthful capers were sketches drawn in the flesh of the world. Understanding the complexity of these practices requires a full appreciation of their ambivalence, and of how artful contrivance acquired the solidity of things real.

We were, of course, completely aware of the pretend nature of the games we played – and this awareness was part of the game, the camp, the fun, without which none of it could have happened. And yet, the figurative perpetually slipped into a kind of literalism. We played our games out to their maximum effect, and down to the smallest nuance. Our fun no less than our conflicts were engaged in, through, and over these real-life games.

## Sontag's Seriousness: At Home in Reality

In her classic essay on camp, Susan Sontag approaches this dimension of our fun and games – its pretend / literal quality – but from the pose of an outsider looking in (which

is to say, as an insider trying to understand the lives of outsiders). First, wrestling with the intricacies of camp, she puts matters very clearly:

> 10. Camp sees everything in quotation marks. It's not a lamp, but a "lamp"; not a woman, but a "woman." To perceive Camp in objects and persons is to understand Being-as-Playing-a-Role. It is the farthest extension, in sensibility, of the metaphor of life as theater.

Almost swept away, Sontag then gets her feet back under her and resumes her straight posture; she retreats from the spirit of play she wishes to conjure – with which she wishes to conjure – and quickly erases the thoughts with which she's toyed:

> 11. Camp is the triumph of the epicene style. (The convertibility of "man" and "woman," "person" and "thing.") But all style, that is, artifice, is, ultimately, epicene. Life is not stylish. Neither is nature (Sontag 2001: 280).

Sontag's flourish of inverted commas – in the title, even "camp" is enclosed in eyebrow-raising quotation marks – no less than her enumeration of each paragraph as its own note, in classical German scholarly style, might be understood as half-hearted efforts at dry camp (Bergman 1993: 7–10). This is to play at play, but not to play – which must always imply some moment of abandon, some loss of self, some surrender to ecstatic con-fusion. In this moment of abandon, in the euphoria of play, it is not so much that "man" becomes "woman," but rather that the quotation marks, shall we say, *waver*: "Woman" becomes woman; the actor temporarily merges with the part he's trying out. This space of becoming is the clearing opened up by utterances or acts undertaken in the subjunctive, pretend mode: a place of liminality, con-fusion, and surrender.

Sontag's eleventh thesis invokes the perpetual rebuke against camp: In its scrambling of referents, it is not *real*; its rich plays off ambiguity are not *natural*; its trans-substantial engagements are not *serious*. Obviously, one cannot make up nature or life just any old way one pleases. Whoever claims otherwise is a charlatan or a madman. But what a lot of idealist work it takes to see nature and life as Sontag ultimately conjures them: hard, stable, uninteresting. According to the idealist metaphysics of heteronormativity, nothing is really convertible into anything else: Men are men, women are women, and things are things. The world is composed of hard atoms as discrete as billiard balls, of autonomous objects really objective and beyond our playful reach.

Now it is always a very serious matter – somewhat ominous, really – when someone tells you to get serious. We are reproved with a sort of self-evident choice, which turns out to be no choice at all. For according to the rules of the game, according to a premise that is never explained, everyone *must* choose seriousness – at the risk of being thought … non-serious.

But why choose seriousness? Why not choose frivolity instead? And if doing precedes being, then how could one ever extricate "style" from "life"? By what razor could one definitively separate "make-believe" from "belief" – especially from beliefs about abstractions like "life" or "nature"?

## Janus Jan / ice

After watching Jan / ice for a while, I noticed a pattern: Janice was absolutely femme around her gay friends – throwing her voice an octave higher than any "real" man would, making large swirls in the air with her hands. But in a "straight" context, Jan was stiff,

flat-footed, and almost menacingly butch – except perhaps for those unusual occasions when he was around girls, and would sometimes revert to "being" a "girl." Not infrequently, this would occur at church, of all places. Here, then, the mystery, and its resolution in practice.

## How to Do Things with Style

*We take up our lives by acting them out*. This is not just a theatrical convention, much less a new insight of theories of performativity, but the gist of Marxism, of existentialism, of sociology in general, and of every critique of essentialism: there is no fixed essence of Being. There are only practices, and the results of practices; engagements, and the entanglements they produce; openings between worldly flesh and fleshly world in which it is impossible to say once and for all what is shaping and what is shaped. As human beings make their lives, so, too, they make themselves (Marx 1998: 37) – even if they don't always know how or what they make.

*Life/Style:* And this is precisely how Merleau-Ponty sets out to understand style in his essay on the subject. To style is to mark or shape. But this style is not something superficial, something added on to a pre-existing reality. Rather, it is essential to the work of perception: It is that "coherent deformation" (1993: 91, 115, 118) that makes the world perceptible, that brings a reality into being, that detaches *things* from their background to give us concrete objects. The material object, insofar as it is both material and objective, is a product of the work of style. Thus Merleau-Ponty's spectacular conclusions: Because the "first perception already stylizes," "(t)here is no choice to be made between the world and art, or between 'our senses' and absolute painting, for they blend into one another" (1993: 86). And thus, too, the primacy of creativity in human practices: "(a)ll perception, all action which presupposes it, and in short, every human use of the body is already *primordial expression*" (1993: 103–104).

The theory of style outlines both a theory of practice and a practical theory of the flesh. A consequence of the distinctly creative human way of knowing and doing things, "style" ignites in the nature of our practical activity, which is to say: it is implicit in our "bond with the world" (Merleau-Ponty 2007: 86), appearing in mundane powers no less than in refined aesthetics. It is that which moves us toward life, toward the world (1993: 103–104).

*Style Projects Beyond One's Place and Time.* Merleau-Ponty (1993: 109) elaborates: "The meaning of (an) action does not exhaust itself in the situation which has occasioned it, or in some vague judgment of value; the action remains as an exemplary type and will survive in other situations in another form. It opens a field. Sometimes it even institutes a world. In any case it outlines a future." Prehistoric cave paintings no less than the lines and shades of modern art outline a future (Merleau-Ponty 1993: 107). This was come-uppance for Sartre, who had argued that *literature* was the privileged bearer of meaning and transcendence because it worked with words, whereas visual art was mute. It also helpfully reverses the temporal thrust of the prevailing theories, which maintain that every action looks backward, to cite or reiterate a past action. "The new [works] do not make the old useless, nor do they expressly contain them; they rival them" (Merleau-Ponty 1993: 116).

*This Queer Body:* Tracing this movement of a yet-to-be-defined being towards a still-to-be-encountered lifeworld, Merleau-Ponty, like a painter seeking inspiration, is always trying to catch practice at its "originary" moment, in its creative upsurge. He draws a series of freehand sketches: this meandering movement is invagination, impregnation, germination – but it is also an appendage, a limb, an extension of the body. It is a continual process of birthing; it is combustion, fire, and metabolism. As growth and change, it is a body, not of parts, but *in excess*, outside and beyond itself. A body "queer" in its very nature. A "nature" whose nature it is – impressed on every organ – to act, to create, to adhere, to open to the world … This body, on its first day, and by dint of its being body, incarnates the triumph of the epicene at the heart of style.

*"Combustion":* What, you say? Identity cannot be thought of as a process of combustion? You know what it is to flame, don't you?

*Primordial frivolity:* The first word, the first tool, the first ritual, the first art: these all were "frivolous" gestures – contrivances, an excess of Invention over Necessity, of means over ends. From within those mists before humans were fully human, each of these gestures calls forth a world: as to be styled. They also herald the advent of all that is uniquely human, in both the making and the made. That is, they conjure a species where Invention is its own Necessity, and where everything exists "as to be made human." Even Nature, on this count, can exist only as that which is shaped by human hands, discerned by human eyes, engaged by human senses. Nature is nothing if not stylish.

Merleau-Ponty thus frames a theory of *human* nature, unequivocally, in terms of the equivocation that is really human. All being is doing, acting, contriving. Artifice is the life-nature of humankind. Originality, transformation, and flux are the essence of existence.

*Ultramodern frivolity:* It is not just at the nether-reaches of theory ("What is matter?" "How does one perceive?" "How does one make things?") that reflection on camp can illuminate something essential. Such reflection might provide some insight into how we make and perceive things under capitalism today. Marx's famous passages on commodity fetishism trace the loss of the worker's labor or life in the object, which appears imbued with life, volition, and other human qualities to the extent that the laborer has been deprived of them. In *Working Like a Homosexual*, Matthew Tinkcom (2002: 5–6, 12) qualifies these polarities; he shows how one can discern in particular kinds of commodities not simply the labor that went into making them but moreover the work that went into effacing the producer in the act of production. This playful work within the labor of production, which provides commentary on conditions of production, can be discerned readily enough in the classic camp objects: certain movies and images from the pre-Stonewall era. Might it also be theoretically observable in more mundane, less artistically construed, objects? And what if it were to turn out that, by dint of the creative, aesthetic playfulness that embellished them, all products of work (commodities or not) have the capacity to take on lives, volitions, and social relations of their own?

## Epiphany

A magical gesture is still burned into my mind, after so many years. In one of our group dances under the mirror ball at The Club, Mother suddenly began performing

an instantly-recognizable John Travolta from *Saturday Night Fever* – the exquisitely banal dance move in which Travolta appears to be touching his belt then pointing to the distance, touching his belt then pointing. It was altogether too much: A man pretending to be a woman pretending to be an actor pretending to be a character… How strange we all looked! Being, in a hall of mirrors – I could no longer find anyone clearly "there." Referentiality delayed, relayed, denied, even trivialized but also chosen, embraced, held tight. I might as well have fallen through the looking glass.

## Huizinga's Paradox: "Pointless but Significant"

> "*The rite is a* dromenon, *which means 'something acted'.… That which is enacted… is a* drama …, *action represented on a stage… [But] here, 'representation' is really* identification… *[T]he rite… is far from being merely imitative; it causes the worshippers to participate in the sacred happening itself.*"
>
> (Johan Huizinga, *Homo ludens*)

In his generalist anthropology of play, Johan Huizinga suggests that people believe their myths and practice their rituals in exactly the same spirit that actors act and players play. Not to put too fine a point on the matter, I would add: in exactly the same spirit that one camps it up. It is all a matter of properly productive equivocation: of being and not-being, of believing and not-believing, of selfing and othering.

In ritual and myth, as in camp, when one takes on a role one plays out a certain shuffling of identity and identification. This mixing-up of ego and alter puts a self on the other side of itself; we are beyond or beside ourselves. In such role-playing, the line between pretense and reality wavers; "the distinction between belief and make-believe breaks down." The consciousness that such play is "'only pretend' does not… prevent it from proceeding with the utmost seriousness, with an absorption, a devotion that passes into rapture and, temporarily, at least, completely abolishes that troublesome 'only' feeling." In "dressing up," the "extra-ordinary" nature of ritual no less than camp "reaches perfection. The disguised or masked individual 'plays' another part, another being. He *is* another being." "The one has *become* the other. In his magic dance the savage *is* a kangaroo" (Huizinga 1955: 25, 8, 13, 25).

By the logic of a form beyond logic, ritual takes us to the far reaches of perspective and time, beyond the confines of the body and toward what the flesh subtends: a self caught up in others, a body entangled in objects, a being realized in practice… This condition of excess, abandon, and con-fusion is no mere luxury; it is the medium that is necessary for there to be a self, a social, a social self in the first place – for "identification," that curious capacity to see oneself as an other, in another, and as a part of a group ("affiliation") is nothing if not a very rapid cycling between inner and outer, ego and alter, self and world. In rites of identity and affiliation, I am both here and not here, one thing in another. Convertibility – of "man" and "woman," "person" and "thing," lamp and "lamp" – is the very crux of the matter, foundational of all that seems stable. What one grasps also encloses oneself. In choosing frivolity, we cannot help but choose seriousness. Frivolity counters the order of reality; it cops off the order of reality; it also inaugurates order and reality. The serious, in its deepest mysteries, is high camp.

## Tommy's Story

Then one day, Tommy, the bright scholarly type, laid his head in my lap and told me his story – a tale that might throw light on why we went to such playful lengths in identity-work, in formalizing affinal ties and bindings in excess of carnal congress:

For years, he had been in love with his best friend Joe, the handsome star quarterback a year older than Tommy. Their affair had begun in junior high school and lasted up until Tommy's eleventh grade, when Joe's parents discovered them having sex. In the ensuing crisis, Joe sold Tommy out. Under interrogation, Tommy spoke, defiantly, of love and commitment. Joe took refuge in the sex of his girlfriend; in his athletic ability; in his sports persona. And because Joe fucked Tommy, and Tommy sucked Joe (or so Joe said), then Tommy became the public Fag – a receptacle, a hole for the poking – and Joe the All-American boy who had had a momentary lapse, who just couldn't help but take advantage of a situation.

Matters could have got worse, much worse, when Tommy's parents made him see a psychiatrist. But after a week of sessions, the psychiatrist concluded that Tommy was fine, and, much to their dismay, suggested that it was the boy's parents who needed therapy.

## The "Politics" of Camp

> *"Play lies outside the antithesis of wisdom and folly, and equally outside those of truth and falsehood, good and evil."*
>
> (Johan Huizinga, *Homo ludens*)

Some of our antics, including our drag names, were harrowingly misogynist. (Katrina Kotex, Summer's Eve, Irma la Douche, and assorted feminine hygiene products were among the more frivolous drag names.) And what would you expect? A cleaned-up, gender-neutral way of playing at one's own abjection? Others, I'm convinced, expressed a kind of solidarity with the suffering of women. "Not a well woman!" was the most common description of anyone's condition. And just why did we suffer? Men, of course! And life, too. *This* life, *our* lives, seemed especially fraught with risk and catastrophe. So we faced fate dramatically, and dramatized life in that style so commonly associated with the term "queens."

Sometimes a camp performance was mired in self-pity and self-loathing – the sad antics of *The Boys in the Band* come to mind. But since everything had a double-meaning, a hidden nuance, an edge, then to dramatize one's plight was not just to inhabit it, intensely, but also to set it aside, nonchalantly; to ridicule it, savagely; to take it someplace it did not originate. Camp thrives on emotional equivocation and cunning: bitter romance. Cynical innocence. Ruthless naïveté. A particularly creative flow of moves and repartée seemed exhilarating, liberating: It projected into something like a future; it took us where we were not already.

I cannot stress this point enough. The usual accountings, which revolve around parody, satire, and irony, only go so far in capturing the affective dimension of camp. Through camp, we left our impress in the world that had so oppressed us. It was *liberating* to force such queer visibility, and it was *exhilarating* to master the playfully performative nuance and quick-witted banter involved in competent camp.

At every turn, camp was a matter of outwitting solemn seriousness in the game of life, of catching Straight Nature in its own kinky perversities, and of defying the Reality of the Real. I say this even – perhaps especially – in mind of those who rejected organized gay politics. For there is a politics, or at any rate something very like it, below the level of overt, coherent "politics." This para-political realm is not where clear positions are articulated, but where sensibilities conflict and values clash; not where meanings and interests emerge, autonomous and authentic, in the clear light of day, but where occult forces heave and shove, darkly, namelessly across the social body. It is an orientation, not a position; a depth, not a manifestation. It goes to that perpetual crisis of a gay way of being: *a man but not a man, am I this or that? A woman but not a woman who wants men, how shall I live?* It was this implicit politics (if politics is the right word) that sustained our antics and oriented us, as it were.

This might suggest how it is that a camp performance can move, in a flash, from icy skepticism to humane sentimentality, from brutal put-downs to good-natured fun. Camp sustains no permanent or universal values save one: an ethos of enjoyment. It is not so much "immoral" or even "amoral" as counter to all *existing* morality – or at any rate, all official, established, sanctimonious, ennobling morality. It thus resources whatever is available: it twists existing conventions into unconventional uses; it plunders high culture for low things, and values low culture for high things; above all else, it implies an enjoyment of the body (Sontag 2001: 291) – an enjoyment that includes defacements and debasements as well as enhancements and adorations. I mean this quite literally. Part of the magic of camp is to convert everyday social humiliation into exquisite aesthetic enjoyment. And in tracing the curves and contours of the body into unexpected places, camp implies a tolerant utopia, a world of sensuous possibilities where everything is valued, everything is savored, everything is enjoyed. It takes its pleasures, perversely, not in ends but in means: in *making* something of something – which is to say, it is at once aesthetic and aestheticizing. Camp is life lived for style, life abandoned to stylization, life understood as the human work of putting a style into things (including a self never quite one's own). The whole point – and this is a more difficult point than might seem apparent at first blush: it neither rushes to proclaim an act "political" nor loses sight of the political dimension – was to put on a good show, and to enjoy the show that is every day staged. In capturing our situation, in another way, this show would convert pathos and suffering into art.

## A REAL Woman

Longsuffering Mother had to get up in the middle of the night to bail two of her Daughters – Charles and Drew – as well as Edna out of jail. The day before, Ed had shown up to work dressed as Edna, whereupon she was promptly fired. Now in full regalia, with hapless Charles and Drew in tow, Edna cut a retaliatory swath through the area's leading family restaurants. She accosted the men at table after table, baiting them, remarking on their middle-aged paunches, making fun of the way their dates were dressed, and repeating the harangue: "What? You've never seen a REAL woman before? You wanna fuck a REAL woman?"

## I'm Not Dancing, It's Just that the Ground Keeps Moving Under my Feet

*"Life is too important a thing to ever talk seriously about it."*
(Oscar Wilde, *Vera, or The Nihilists*)

Whether we were political or apolitical, we were all aware, in deepest flesh, of what our lives *resisted*. This was the end of the 1970s, and given our location and age, we were especially exposed to hostile volleys at the beginning of the ongoing Culture Wars.[6]

On the one hand, the flow of history seemed to be inexorably with us. Rising standards of living, rising levels of education, deferred ages of marriage, greater individual autonomy, and the gradual decomposition of older, patriarchal institutional forms: these all seemed to point, if not toward a kind of gay inevitability, then at any rate toward a constantly expanding arena of sexual freedom, experimentation, choice, and tolerance.[7] The eruption of gay liberation in big cities a decade earlier, along with the forms of gay visibility this implied in the public arena everywhere, made new forms of life if not readily habitable then at least thinkable, imaginable.

On the other hand, gay liberation had never really sunk its roots into the rural and small-town South from which most of us hailed, much less had it penetrated the working- and middle-class sectors from which most of us came. (Our form of gay culture – drag, camp, queen culture – thus stood in stark contrast to the Levi's and Leather clone culture that reigned on the Castro and in the Village; its quaintness might serve as a succinct illustration of the principle of "uneven development" in sexual subcultures.) Meanwhile, political backlash was in full swing, and gay rights legislation was being repealed in medium-sized cities by citizen's ballot initiatives – an indicator of intensifying conflicts even where tolerance had once seemed far advanced. And in our less tolerant geographies, the religious New Right was emerging as a coherent political force; its leaders' strategy of organizing cadres by stoking homophobia was already well established. Local churches, politicians, and communities – having thus had their attention focused on homosexuality – were more stridently anti-gay than in the past, when such issues were left largely undiscussed. (Can you imagine Don's horrific situation? He was denounced by name from the pulpit when he showed up at church, kindly grandmother in tow, during a return visit to his sleepy burgh.) Our first families, invariably, were grounded in this social bedrock: real sites of social retrenchment in the name of traditional family values.

In short, we stood on the material ground of an earthquake that was at once cultural, political, and economic. The same constellation of historical developments that pushed us to step out into the light as "gay men" also constricted our openness and challenged our right to exist. As we struggled to define ourselves in a backwater of gay life, our experiences were thus enfolded with – but not folded under – the contours and contradictions of a much larger political economy, itself fluctuating between affluence and crisis, freedom and militarism, liberal cosmopolitanism and parochial conservatism … Our very existence occasioned – at the heart of that "haven," our natal families – crises of confrontation and reaction that continue to reverberate through the social substratum today. We, in our very selves, were not just the objects but also the media of these conflicts.

Caught in such a world of force-relations, we longed – nostalgically, hysterically – for other bodies, other ways of being. Held in the grips of such contradictions, many members of my cohort concluded that it was best not to mix private sex with public politics.

## The REAL, the Contrived, and the Art of Embellishment

> *"The whole point of Camp is to dethrone the serious. Camp is playful, anti-serious. More precisely, Camp involves a new, more complex relation to 'the serious.'"*
>
> (Susan Sontag, "Notes on 'Camp'")

Early one evening, Mother, Matt, Charles, Mike, and I were returning home from an outing, walking down the sidewalk, making merry, and talking among ourselves. I don't believe we were exceptionally overstated on this particular evening (but of course these things are relative). Mike and Charles were in some kind of competition, to see who could better embellish a story they were relating – and in the process, gestures, like inflections, grew broader. Their impromptu tale was a salad of half-mixed genders, double-entendres, mild obscenities, and Rabelaisian humor … And of course, our usual forms of address were in play: *"Girl!" "Sister!" "Miss Thang!"*

Half-noticed, a middle-aged man was walking just ahead of us on the sidewalk. Exasperated and perhaps a bit disturbed, he hurled violently around to face us, and shouted: "BE REAL!" At first, I thought he was incoherent, and I am still not convinced that he was not suffering from a mild dementia that made him extremely sensitive to our verbal play. After a pause, he repeated himself, somewhat desperately: "BE REAL!"

Later, much later, with the same sense that one remembers a half-forgotten dream, I realized that his words, like flashing neon, threw a glaring light on the matter. They conjured the same principle, with the same force, that adjured me to "BE A MAN" when I came out to my parents; they triggered the same sickening vertigo as Sontag's invocation of petrified "life" and unchanging "nature."

But why be a man? Why not become something else altogether? And why choose Reality, all serious and somber? Why not choose another, more playful image, and act it out?

The reality of the real, as ground for our surreal manipulations: This was one of our obsessions, a subject we visited frequently. We did not deny the reality of the real; we played off it, we poached its most hallowed parts, we made war on it. Of course, in this war, Reality was not without its weapons. Above all else, it was not within our power to vanquish heteronormativity simply by wishing it away.

## This Life That Chooses Me

When I say that this life, our lives, were fraught with risk and catastrophe, this must be understood literally, not metaphorically. All in roughly the same period of time: Nicole – one of the "straight" women – found herself hopelessly in love with Mother and attempted suicide at the dark culmination of one of our wacky parties. She ran, full-speed, into the traffic of a busy highway. Mother ran behind her, throwing her

into a ditch on the far side of the road while barely saving himself from the onslaught of a Mack truck, which was barreling down the road like some runaway reality principle. Rick's "husband," a sergeant in the Army stationed at a nearby military base, was going through court martial proceedings on trumped-up charges of raping a male subordinate with whom he'd had consensual sex. (When their affair was discovered, after some months of passion, the private tried to save himself by charging that he had been coerced into sex by the sergeant.) Dispossessed and indigent, I was thrown out of the dorm and thus left homeless for two months; during this time I alternately slept in unlocked cars and imposed upon people. Meanwhile, it came out that Mother was really several years older than we had thought – and that back home, Mother had been both a husband and father, no quotation marks implied. That, and more…

## The Spin of Violence and Counterviolence

> *"You can't camp about something you don't take seriously. You're not making fun* of *it; you're making fun* out *of it."*
>
> (Christopher Isherwood, *The World in the Evening*)

Members of our family were, at any given moment and in large numbers, going through hard times. A couple had received menacing phone calls and anonymous death threats. Several had been assaulted on campus – "queerbashed" – and one was beaten quite badly. Others were the objects of perpetual torment by straight dormmates. So it was that I was pelted with plastic bags of urine one evening when I passed beneath a dormitory window. "Mother-fuckers," I kept muttering, "God-damned mother-fuckers, they've drenched me with piss."

And on this occasion, Mother comforted me by reading in dramatic voice that notable passage from *Brideshead Revisited* (Waugh 1999: 50): the one where Anthony Blanche disarmingly addresses the group of boisterous Oxford students who threaten to dunk him in a fountain.

> Dear sweet clodhoppers, if you knew anything of sexual psychology you would know that nothing could give me keener pleasure than to be manhandled by you meaty boys. It would be an ecstasy of the very naughtiest kind. So if any of you wish to be my partner in joy come and seize me. If on the other hand, you wish to satisfy some obscure and less easily classified libido and see me bathe, come with me quietly, dear louts, to the fountain.

As Mother read, Elsie Cow, Anita Mann, and Bertha Butts cleaned me up while variously acting out the parts of defiant Queen and dull-witted Ruffian. Then, they pondered the scene in which the urine had been collected – each in his own toilet? or a collective pissing match, in a single room? – until finally, in spite of myself, my choked rage gave way to a tickling sensation at the bottom of my throat, and we all collapsed in laughter.

Not all our cares could be so readily transubstantiated by the magic of camp. By now, several of us were quite destitute, cut off from our natal families. Jim was thus arrested for shoplifting in a grocery store. Warren had cashed his financial aid checks, dropped out of school, and moved away.

Matt, hounded for months by his religious parents, eventually experienced a psychotic break with reality. The truth came to him as a revelation from God: a homosexual dispensation was at hand. Like Abraham, who had received a promise, and like those Old Testament prophets called to witness a future no one else had seen, Matt had been blessed with a vision. A Queer Christ, in lavender robes and butch boots, would pour out grace and redemption on a homosexual remnant. Gays would be led, arm in arm, to a gentle land.

Matt in his way, and we in ours, gave back to society its own unconventional likeness: family, kinship, faith, order. Against the prevailing force-relations, our antics were designed to establish an opposite and negative force; to mimetically counter the prevailing norms; to magically intervene in the theater of life. We were eddies, swirling in the contrary direction on the other side of some phantom equator. *He's family… She's my sister… He's a member of the Church… She's my girlfriend… He's my husband…*

## Rites of Possession

> *"Are the players mocking, or are they mocked?"*
>
> (Johan Huizinga, *Homo ludens*)

Everyone had a different relationship to his feminine persona. Some indeed thought that this was their gay interior, given vent – that this was just the way gay men *acted* when freed from restraints. We were become the ridiculous and fabulous creatures everyone had taught us to fear and loathe. Others expressed skepticism at the equation of homosexuality with effeminacy, but recognized the social and historical connections between the two, and enjoyed camping it up anyway. Some were detached and ironic about the whole affair, and delivered every line from an icy distance, as a quote within a quote within a quote. Caught in such webs of surplus meaning, it is a wonder more of us did not lose all distinctions.

Although we were all aware of this act as an *act*, a contrivance, a put-on, few of us considered ourselves altogether in control of this faculty, and a number reported involuntarily shrieking out signal quotes – "Wrecked!" "Grace!" "My bouffant!" – on inappropriate occasions like class or church: involuntary expressive twitchings, like a transvestic Tourette's Syndrome. At the same time, almost everyone saw this kind of performance as an obstacle to getting laid, and most would shut down the camp and butch it up whenever a promising man appeared.[8] (If we were "girls" at home among our friends, it was "men" that everyone – including other men – desired.)

John, an athlete and classmate, once came along with us to a gay discotheque, somewhat indifferently, and only because he was "doing some research for a sociology class." He came out that very evening. And within two days he was a practiced "girl," unleashing torrents of effeminate banter and good-humored camp. For several months, his affect ran to performative extremes of shrieking, mincing, lisping. Even the bitchiest of dish-queens opined that he could cause embarrassment if not outright trouble on the street. After a few more months, the novelty of being a swish wore off, and he only femmed it up once in a while.

I remember being somewhat awkward and mechanical about all this. My friends would tease me, telling me that I was too stiff, too boy-next-door, to really read, dish,

and camp. I thus most frequently ended up providing an audience for other people's histrionics. My feelings about these performances were divided, torn. Strictly speaking, I believed female mimicry to be sexist and old-fashioned. At the same time, I longed to join in the merry abandon, to let myself go, to fling myself into those unpredictable improvisations that constitute the delirium of camp.

One night, I did manage a partial surrender to some wayward impulse, and found myself camping it up with the best of our party. I exceeded even Mother, that most practiced of girls. Everyone was congratulating me afterwards: "Girl, you were *flaming* last night – burning bright blue!" So the next night I stood for an hour in front of the mirror, and practiced at moving my lips, head, and body. I wanted to see, not only how I had done it, but also what it had looked like. But the moment had passed, and I could not relive it. As difficult as it is to act, it is not any easier to catch oneself in the act of acting.

I never quite got past this stage of having to work at my effects. Others felt that their feminine personas would come to them mysteriously, and from afar. They would speak of their drag personas as real beings, imbued with wills of their own, like spirits who would sometimes pay them visits. Mike (who was my boyfriend for about a week) had actually developed two very distinct drag personas, with two different names: one a bitter older woman, given to acid wit and cutting remarks; the other a sensuous and fun-loving younger woman. I did not much care for the old shrew Mike harbored within.

Charles (who was my boyfriend for one evening) would be possessed by the spirit of Aunt Pitty-Pat, that unremarkable minor character from "Gone with the Wind." A strangely unglamorous choice, if choice it was, for a drag persona. He would say, "I feel Aunt Pitty-Pat coming on," and then he would gradually go into character. One day he told me, "Aunt Pitty-Pat was here for three whole days – the bitch wouldn't leave. I can't remember a fucking thing. What happened?" Charles also swore it had been Aunt Pitty-Pat, not him, who had thrown a drink in Mother's face one evening, in the heat of a particularly sharp argument.

And Dear Old Mother complained that she had been in her flaming persona for so long she could hardly come out of it. It was sticking to her like the tar baby to Br'er Rabbit. "I have *got* to butch it up," she wailed at me one day, slashing a cigarette in the air, exactly as Bette Davis would have done had she possessed stubby fingers and been wide of girth. "Why?" I demanded, "You have a husband, and he loves you just the way you are."

"Darling, it's not *that*," she answered, eyes rolling aloft as though to indicate that I was not her brightest offspring. "Who the hell is *ever* going to hire me when I get out of school if I act like *this*?"

Our ritual practices were deliberate, motivated, and intentional. Their symbolism was explicit, even studied. But it would be hard to say where mockery ended and devotion began, or to separate out protest from conformity. And these forces were not altogether predictable. In some sense, they dominated and mastered *us*. To use a certain language: our actions "exceeded" the intentions of the actors. This surfeit, then, marks the spot where style effects a creation beyond the creativity of the creator, where practice outruns intentionality. It is ecstatic but it is not always pleasant to be caught up in these surges and flows.

## Mother's Lament

> *"To understand ritual practice… means describing the most brutally material bases of the investment in magic,… which [cause] a life dominated by anxiety about matters of life and death to be lived as an uncertain struggle against uncertainty."*
>
> (Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*)

Perhaps Mother's lament was not properly self-loving and well adjusted. No doubt she was a bad homosexual role model. But then, all the discourses of responsible self-disclosure, rational agency, and balanced citizenship seemed alien to our experiences of youthful rebellion, in which it was never quite clear whether we were embracing our lives or throwing ourselves into the void, whether we were acting or whether we were moved by agencies over which we could only exert a little leverage now and again.

And what became of my family over time? So many of my sisters failed out of school that I eventually stopped counting. I cannot be sure about the exact number (for people disappear, to take up other lives in other places), but my best estimate is that only about 20 percent of us ever finished our baccalaureate – and not one of us finished on a regular four-year schedule.

The family scattered, mostly to big towns like Atlanta and Charlotte, mostly disappearing into the low-wage service sector. A small cluster went to work for a time at Disneyworld in Orlando, that grandiose simulacrum of wholesome fun and American family values. A few returned to sleepy burghs, to live in trailer courts and haunt those anonymous spaces at the interstices of small-town family life: truck stops, bus stops, and pornographic video parlors. Several had trouble with the law – drugs, check-kiting, petty scams, hustling. A few, I hear, eventually went to jail on drug charges, when incarceration rates began to rise during that long ramp-up to an American police state that began even before the Reagan era and has not yet abated. Some got religion, and lost it again. (Poor Don would find Jesus, then lose him – then find him again, then lose him again, see-sawing back and forth between things of the spirit and things of the flesh.) A couple converted to heterosexuality, then de-converted. One got married, one was murdered, and several more died from AIDS-related causes. As I tended to lose contact with people after the mid-80s, I suspect that a horrifying percentage of us ultimately expired during the plague years.

## Freedom

> *"Expression is like a step taken in a fog – no one can say where, if anywhere, it will lead."*
>
> (Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Sense and Non-Sense*)

I have tried to let low stories guide high theory. And in telling these stories, I have tried to avoid the heroic narrative, which urges everyone to take on a responsible identity and to labor politically for a button-down community. Such prefabricated narratives do not seem to me to get at the sociability of the social or the carnality of the body. They do not even seem to me to prepare the way for an understanding of politics. In any event, I have questioned the usual association of camp with parody and have tried to disentangle these both from the subject of political activism.

It might be objected that my snapshots of identity flows and practical ambiguities have pessimistic implications. They do, if one insists on certainty as a precondition for freedom, or on identities fixed in their grievances as a requirement for politics. But what is certain? Certainly not that an act will be effective, that a performance will fire, or that a practice will be consequential in the way it was intended. And what is really fixed – or better yet, what kind of work might give beings and things the frozen, unambiguous appearance of fixture? Likely not the kind of work that has anything to do with human freedom. At any rate, freedom is not the freedom to be able to predict that one will get what one wants, or to know in advance that an action will go straight to its intended object.

Meaningful freedom consists in creative, transformative practices – but precisely *because* they are creative, and by dint of their very creativity, our acts are incongruous with our desires: they surprise us, and they come to embody wills beyond the will that gave rise to them. We act, yet our practices run ahead of us; we meet them, like strangers on the road. In saying so, and in marking the role of imagination in kinship and ambivalence in the play of identity-work, I trust that I have not dishonored my family.

## Seeing Mother

Unexpectedly and as though conjured by my writing in answer to a question, Mother appeared. I saw her walking up P Street, near DuPont Circle, on a brisk Fall day in the late 1990s. Under the waning sun, time had not much changed her features: she was still rotund, and given to the effects of gravity. Her gestures were familiar: the same way of inclining her body forward. The same way of keeping her head cocked, when she looked up. The same shuffling, unbalanced walk: a short-stepped amble, at once exuberant and cautious, giddy but restrained – giving every appearance that it might fall off into a confused and staggering gambol at any moment.

A combination of daring craft and vulnerable humor radiated, like a halo, around Mother's gestures and movements. A lot has happened in the better part of fifteen years, but I think I know what kind of history these gestures impress and express. Only a life of dancing at the edge of a precipice could prepare such a rhythm.

Roger N. Lancaster

## Acknowledgments

Thanks to various interlocutors whose conversations and feedback have shaped this essay over time: Andy Bickford, Micaela di Leonardo, Marcial Godoy, Fran Mascia-Lees, Esther Newton.

## NOTES

1 I say "straight women" when perhaps I ought to say "non-gay women." These women were, in that unflinching vernacular, "fag-hags."

2 See David Valentine's insightful discussion (2007: 3–28).

3 My use of the term "devotion" refers to Huizinga's understanding of the rite, where "representation … causes the worshippers to participate in the sacred happening itself" (1955: 14–15); but it also borrows from Rambuss's suggestive discussion of "homodevotion" (1995).
4 My overview on camp here and throughout owes much to varied sources: Esther Newton's *Mother Camp* (1979 [1972]); Susan Sontag's "Notes on Camp" (2001 [1966]: 275–292); Bruce Rodgers' definitions (1972); David Bergman's introduction (1993: 3–16). I have worked both with and against the grain of Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1999: 171–180) and *Bodies that Matter* (1993: 1–23).
5 "All that philosophers have handled for millennia has been conceptual mummies; nothing actual has escaped from their hands alive" (Nietzsche 2003: 45).
6 See Jenkins's (2006) history of the 1970s; see also Duggan and Hunter's (1995) essays on the sex wars.
7 I crib a page from John D'Emilio's (1997) classic essay, "Capitalism and Gay Identity."
8 As Bersani (2010: 14) straightforwardly observes, "if you're out to make someone you turn off the camp."

## REFERENCES

Bergman, David, ed., 1993 Camp Grounds: Style and Homosexuality. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.

Bersani, Leo, 2010 Is the Rectum a Grave? and Other Essays. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Butler, Judith, 1993 Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex." New York: Routledge.

Butler, Judith, 1999 [1990] Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. New York: Routledge.

D'Emilio, John, 1997 Capitalism and Gay Identity. *In* The Gender / Sexuality Reader: Culture, History, Political Economy. Roger N. Lancaster and Micaela di Leonardo, eds. pp. 169–178. New York: Routledge.

di Leonardo, Micaela, 2000 Exotics at Home: Anthropologies, Others, and American Modernities. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Duggan, Lisa and Nan D. Hunter, 1995 Sex Wars: Sexual Dissent and Political Culture. New York: Routledge.

Huizinga, Johan, 1955 [1944] *Homo ludens*: A Study of the Play Element in Culture. Boston: Beacon Press.

Jenkins, Philip, 2006 Decade of Nightmares: The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Marx, Karl, 1998 The German Ideology, including Theses on Feuerbach and Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy. Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 1962 [1945] Phenomenology of Perception. Colin Smith trans. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 1993 [1952] Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence. *In* The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader. Gaylen A. Johnson, ed. pp. 76–120. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 2007 The Contemporary Philosophical Movement [Interview conducted by Maurice Fleurent, 1946]. *In* The Merleau-Ponty Reader. Ted Toadvine and Leonard Lawlor, eds. pp. 85–87. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Newton, Esther, 1979 [1972] Mother Camp: Female Impersonators in America. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Nietzsche, Friedrich, 2003 [1889] Twilight of the Idols and The Anti-Christ. London: Penguin.

Rambuss, Richard, 1995 Homodevotion. *In* Cruising the Performative: Interventions into the Representation of Ethnicity, Nationality, and Sexuality. Sue-Ellen Case, Phillip Brett, and Susan Leigh Foster, eds. pp. 71–89. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Rodgers, Bruce, 1972 The Queens' Vernacular: A Gay Lexicon. San Francisco: Straight Arrow Books.

Sontag, Susan, 2001 [1966] Against Interpretation and Other Essays. New York: Picador.

Tinkcom, Matthew, 2002 Working Like a Homosexual: Camp, Capital, Cinema. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Valentine, David, 2007 Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Waugh, Evelyn, 1999 [1944] Brideshead Revisited: The Sacred and Profane Memories of Captain Charles Ryder. Boston: Back Bay Books.

Weston, Kath. 1997 [1991] Families We Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship. Revised Edition with a New Preface. New York: Columbia University Press.

CHAPTER 4

# BIOETHICS
## *Embodied Ethics: From the Body as Specimen and Spectacle to the Body as Patient*

*Nora L. Jones*

### INTRODUCTION

René Magritte's famous painting *The Treachery of Images* (*La trahison des images*) shows a pipe, below which, in cursive script, Magritte wrote *Ceci n'est pas une pipe*, "This is not a pipe." A moment's reflection clarifies, of course, that this is not a pipe. But, *what* is not a pipe? The image? Is it "This" that is not a pipe? Is the phrase "This is not a pipe" not a pipe? Is it the combination of the painting of a pipe and the words that is not a pipe? What do we have to know to understand this painting? Must we have seen an actual pipe, read French, have read Foucault (Foucault 1983), or studied surrealism? Do I ignore, dismiss, or linger on the painting? Do I laugh and move on? Do I call it a pipe and be done with it, as a bioethicist guided by principleism might? Or, do I use it as entry to an anthropological analysis of the body? My point here is that how one "gets" the picture tells us something about the person doing the getting. Further, Magritte's declaration that the picture of a pipe is not a pipe breaks our expectation that representation gives us *the* thing itself. This applies not only to paintings of pipes, but equally to photographic and computer-generated clinical images of bodies and body parts, including X-rays, CT-scans, and gene sequences.

So why do many observers believe it's a pipe, or at least treat it as if it were a pipe? Or more to the point here, why do we believe certain things about the body and

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

representations of the body in medicine and society? The underlying question is how do we come to know what we know? The answer is found in our theory of communication, for it is through language and communication that we learn what is "real." In a simplified summary of the traditional, and in many spheres still dominant, view of communication, someone, person A, communicates message B, which is received as B, by person C. It is a transmission model of communication that equates intention with reception. It reflects an unproblematized, imperious understanding of the world. Instead, I follow a theory of communication articulated in John Berger's central thesis that "the way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe" (1972: 8). Rather than trying to understand why reception sometimes doesn't equal intention, for example, a common occurrence in patient–practitioner interactions and the source of much analysis in bioethics, idiosyncratic interpretations of messages become entry points to anthropological examinations of a person's lived-in, body-in-context-in-action.

This approach fundamentally challenges bioethics. For in believing that a statement is real, and, similarly, that an image represents reality, we are assuming that the latter, "reality," is somehow superior and that the image is either subordinate or supplemental. This is Plato's position in the allegory of the cave – the prisoners who can only see shadows are not aware that outside the cave there is a "real" world, and that understanding and knowing this "real" world is the utmost goal.

If, alternatively, we concede that the representation becomes in essence another, parallel, or refracted reality, then neither the representation nor the reality can by definition claim ontological superiority. As an anthropologist I am more interested in how the prisoners understand and make meaning of the shadows. Language, both verbal and visual, is arbitrary and conventional, a system of codes that connects images and words with thoughts and our understanding of what the "real" world is. Gato, cat. Small, furry animal, or gateau, dessert pastry: our use, interpretation, and reception of the word or image depend on what we're familiar with and with whom we are communicating. It is the shared nature of language that makes words and images "real" and meaningful, not a theorized abstract ideal that privileges the sender or the message.

Moving this perspective to the body, we see that while the body is at the center of bioethics, it remains overlooked and unseen, considered either as the vessel of the decision-making self or the physical object that is the subject of medical interventions. Many areas of concern for bioethicists, such as informed consent, advanced directives, or the mediation of a conflict over treatment options are considered as if the key players were disembodied rational actors, staunchly holding onto the perception that they are looking at a pipe. Anthropology, on the other hand, revels in the flesh, the scars, the adornments, and the physical shapes in which culture becomes incarnate. An anthropological gaze focused on the lived-body can help contextualize and ground human behavior by asking not only the *what,* but the *how* and *why* of people's actions and beliefs. In short, anthropology has the potential to enliven bioethics.

The central purpose of this chapter, then, is to ask what happens when we "embody" the body-self of bioethics. What happens when we turn our attention to the lived body, the body-in-action-in context, which is, with important exceptions (see Campbell 2009 and Shildrick and Mykitiuk 2005), so often ignored in bioethics? Do the relationships among selves, bodies, illness, and decision-making, look different? Can this enlivening change the way we see the key stakeholders of doctors, patients, caregivers, and families? Can it, by fleshing out (pun intended) the players, make bioethics more ethical?

To address these questions, I look to three key conceptions of the body that are implicated in bioethics: the patient body as seen by the practitioner, the generalized ill or diseased body found in popular culture, and the patient's understanding of her own body. I refer to these, respectively, as the body as specimen, spectacle, and patient.

Each of these three bodies considered here is "extraordinary," to extend Rosemarie Garland-Thomson's (1996) use of the term as applied to the disabled body to ones more generally implicated in medicine, such as those that are chronically ill. I refer to bodies that differ from the norm, or the "network-standard body," to adapt a term from linguistics that refers to the unaccented "everyman" network-standard English spoken by news anchors. I am discussing the extraordinary body as one that is clinically different, physiologically, morphologically, psychologically, or biologically.

The "body as specimen" characterizes the way in which Western biomedical practice and practitioners, infused with the legacy of Enlightenment philosophy and Cartesian materialism, have come to view the body of the patient as an object, as something in need of repair. It refers to the body that is penetrated by advanced imaging technologies, and the metonymization, so to speak, whereby clinical diagnostic images become stand-ins for the patient's body. The "body as spectacle" represents the anonymous and metaphorical bodies of popular culture. This is the body that is good to think with (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987), the body that allows us to see *through* it to attitudes about bodies, health, and illness in the larger society and culture. Finally, the "body as patient" brings us to the lived experiences, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of the sick or diseased. We see in this body how living with illness is bound up intimately with identity and worldview. It is here also where we see resistance to the body as specimen in the stories patients tell and in the strength and beauty of their alternative models for their illness. It is also the body that, when given its due attention, offers a way toward improving bioethics.

And so I conclude this chapter by offering suggestions for an embodied ethics. I argue that critically examining the contingent nature of the body – how it is manipulated, viewed, objectified and lived in – can enliven the field of bioethics, making it more cognizant of the real world and lived experiences of the bodies it addresses and, thus in the end, more ethical.

## The Body as Specimen

The *body as specimen* refers to the body that medical encounters create. It refers to the body that is prodded and probed, tested and treated; it is "the spleen in room 12." This is not the intact patient body of 100 years ago, a subject lying in her own bed with the doctor making a house call. The specimen body is an object of medical attention created by the particular path medical institutions followed toward modernization, characterized by the rise of interrelated specializations and the development and eventual reliance on sophisticated imaging technologies.

A short caveat before proceeding: in critiquing the particular body that medicine constructs, I am not discounting the medical advancements that save or prolong life, and make other lives possible in ways that would have been unimaginable a few generations ago. I am also not saying that biomedicine's conception of the patient as specimen is always problematic. Patients are embedded in the same culture as physicians, and therefore often articulate their goals in similar terms. The specimen model

does not in itself always raise ethical questions. A broken arm needs to be fixed. This does not discount the fact, however, that biomedicine literally sees that arm differently than patients do.

The body as specimen is first imagined, created, seen in medical school (Becker 1961; Good 1994). In the United States, medical students are introduced to the human body through anatomy and dissection. Students encounter disease, their ultimate grail, first at the level of gross anatomy, then in cells under a microscope, and only then does the student encounter a patient with the disease (Good 1994: 75). Or, given this trajectory, perhaps it is better said that the student encounters the disease-carrier. In learning to be a practitioner, students also learn a particular language with which to describe what is important about patients. Practitioner case presentations and patient record keeping focus on the clinical facts that represent the patient's body as a specimen to be studied. The ritualized, quotidian nature of these activities makes them powerful forces in the perpetuation of a body as specimen worldview.

With the emergence of modern medicine, record keeping about patients changed drastically (Berg and Harterink 2004). Unlike the earlier leather-bound doctors' ledgers of the early 20th century, where patient data was entered only sporadically and was organized according to the doctor's life and personal timelines, modern medicine, with its increasingly complex system of specialized medical professionals and institutions and new investigative techniques, required a new form of record keeping, the patient-centered record. The patient record came to serve as the "gravitational node" in the interrelations of the patient with the growing number of professionals and investigative tests contemporary patients are subjected to (Berg and Harterink 2004: 14). In other words, the patient-centered medical record is more than a repository of patient information. It is a tool of the emerging methods of scientific management, a sociomaterial apparatus, in which everyone from hospital administrators, billing departments, and medical records librarians are implicated (Berg and Harterink 2004: 23).

What does this new, modern-medical-record-body look like? In contrast to the intact and contextualized patient body from earlier 20th-century doctors' ledgers, the specimen body is temporally marked, quantitatively described, and graphically portrayed. While patients have always been historicized and charted in medical encounters, instead of charting a life's narrative inclusive of the contextual meat, modern records focus in on only the anatomical sites of interest. Modern medical records are organized by an abstract and regulated time that doesn't exist in the "real" world. Hospital records in particular exemplify this, as in-patients are woken up at regular intervals to repeat tests and take temperatures, the numeric data graphed so that these fleeting and abstract moments in time become concretized (Berg and Harterink 2004: 25–27).

It is hard to see the embodied patient in the patient-centered record. The fragmentation of the body into test results, specialized images, and disease labels does not represent the patient, but only her disease. This is the specimenization of the body. Looking toward the future, as calls for national electronic medical records amplify, there are reasons to believe that this electronic system, which requires consistency and regulates data entry across patients, will continue, and may even further exacerbate, this disembodying trend (Satkoske 2010). The science fiction scenario of being implanted with microchips holding our medical record does not now seem all that far-fetched. Analogizing from "we both are and have bodies," we may soon both be and have medical records.

Specimenization, the replacement of a holistic image of a person by an isolated image, and the biomedical ideology that supports it, happens outside the clinic walls as well, as exemplified by brain scanning technology. In no other realm have images of one area of our fragmented selves, MRI, CT, PET and other scan images, so completely *become* us. As we look at a snapshot and say "Oh look at Uncle John!" we feel we can look at a brain scan and say the same. When we see a brain image, we believe we can see a representation of our thoughts, a logical assumption in a culture where you can buy a toy that powers marbles around a maze with your brain alone. We don't see brain images for the mediated, technologically constructed products they are, the end-result of a complex process that begins with a body in a machine, spends some time as numbers, and is then converted to images (Dumit 1999; Joyce 2006). "This is a pipe" we seem to want to say.

With brain imaging we see this valorization and reification of the image in multiple spheres. Looking at the use of brain scans in court settings, for example, while I may not know or recognize a brain with impulse control issues, as a juror I might be inclined to agree with the prosecutor that the large number of red zones in the evidence of an MRI image of an accused murderer's brain is indicative of guilt. Cultural associations of color come in to play here, as an MRI with blue zones would not invoke danger, rage, or violence as red does. Also playing a role is our culture's propensity and need to "other." From the first moments when group A of early humans bumped into group B, we have found ways of distinguishing "us" from "them," by religion, phenotype, or language. The diffusion of the body as specimen ideology into society as a whole has provided a high-tech and medically legitimated visual rationale to tell the abnormal apart from the normal.

What is often lost in the embrace of these images is that they are being chosen by specific individuals in particular contexts, and interpreted in different ways depending on the subject positioning of the receiver. In the legal, medical, and cultural mess that was the death of Terri Schiavo, the most common referenced images were either brain scans presented on the nightly news showing the deleterious effects of a persistent vegetative state (PVS) on brain functioning, or highlights from family-made video showing a few seconds of motion set against 15 years of inactivity (Lesage 2006). Looking at the brain scan, presented side-by-side with images of a "normal" brain, those of us with no knowledge of neurology can "see" that a PVS brain is in no way functioning normally. And even for those among us who accept PVS as a legitimate diagnosis, these videos of Terri "smiling" at her mother are utterly compelling and disturbing because in those seconds she looks cognizant and engaged, disconfirming our expectations. Taking these two images at face value leaves us in contradiction – how can she be both in a vegetative state and be that aware? But taking them at face value is analogous to looking at *The Treachery of Images* and seeing a pipe.

Instead of privileging these images and taking them as authoritative statements of reality, I argue that we should look *through* the images, contextualizing them, giving attention to the particulars of the creator, medium, and intended receivers. Such a method helps us to see the settings, contexts, and the hidden and overt motivations of the players. Looking at the images alone is not enough; we also need to know that the images were selected by researcher for publication, a criminal trial lawyer for a jury, or by a religious group arguing against the removal of a young woman's feeding tube.

The cultural authority of medicine extended to the products of medicine, to patient charts, clinical images, and brain scans, and then escaped the confines of medicine. The specimen body that has joined this exodus is disembodied and piecemeal, seen in collections of specialized and technologically mediated clinical images. In the contemporary medical system, characterized by hierarchies and systems of difference, compartmentalization, and stratification, there is no place for the full, lived, extraordinary body. To find this whole extraordinary body, we have to turn our gaze to popular culture and society.

## The Body as Spectacle

The body as spectacle widens our lens away from isolated body parts back to whole bodies, to the extraordinary bodies that exist in and are referenced by popular culture. The extraordinary body, like all bodies, is loaded with emic meanings. Unique to the extraordinary body, however, are the external signifiers and cultural metaphors and associations that viewers of these bodies use. The body as spectacle thus links the individual and the social, and leads us to ask questions of visuality, about the relationship between the body and the person, and about the ethics of looking.

In the discussion that follows I consider both living extraordinary bodies and bodies on display. There are important distinctions, and bioethics has done a good job of addressing the questions unique to displayed bodies, of dignity and informed consent, for example. I am moving attention out from the subjects / objects of the gaze, to the viewers and to their role in creating the spectaclization of extraordinary bodies, both living and dead.

Looking at extraordinary bodies, at the extremes of the human form, is one of the reasons people come to the Mütter Museum of Anatomy and Pathology in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, a museum with a cult status that draws visitors from around the world. Founded in 1856 as a medical teaching collection for the Fellows of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, the nation's oldest extant private medical society, the collections include wet and dry specimens and wax models of congenital defects, photographs of patients with infectious diseases, medical instruments, and items of historical interest, such as the conjoined livers and plaster death cast of Chang and Eng Bunker, the original "Siamese" twins. Prior to the rise of university based medical teaching and easily reproduced illustrated textbooks, such collections were the only way for medical students to see the range of human anatomy with all of its pathological particulars. The Mütter's famous collections of fetal specimens showing congenital defects ranging from variously conjoined twins to hydro- and anencephaly were amassed for such a purpose. Soon after the creation of the Mütter, however, such teaching collections went out of style, and for the following 100 years the Mütter's collections grew slowly, primarily with contributions of items of local historical medical interest, and the Museum was visited only by a handful of Fellows and their guests. A 1969 *Philadelphia Magazine* article about the wall of skulls exposed the Mütter as a free and worthwhile *public* destination for Philadelphians (Anonymous 1969) and marked the turning point in the life of the Mütter. Soon after this publication the Mütter's attendance began to rise. It became a feature in travel guidebooks geared to the weird and wonderful, such as *Amazing America* (Stern 1978). The Museum's curator was a recurring guest on the David Letterman show in the 1980s, and by the

early 2000s, the Mütter was attracting over 10,000 visitors a year and the curator was receiving postcards addressed to "the Mega-colon [a 6 foot long dried large intestine], c/o the Mütter Museum."

In a reception study with tourists to the Mütter conducted in 1999, I interviewed Jane, a 26-year-old woman who was visiting the Museum after a year of international travel. She had learned about the Mütter from a fellow tourist to a Saigon war crimes museum who told her about the Mütter's similarly "morbid" and "grotesque" displays. In describing what she liked about the Mütter, she said:

> Well, like when you see something that is so out of the ordinary, and yet it was human, you know, just like you arrive, it's just so incredibly deformed, and you don't usually see these things on a daily basis. I mean, they're still human, but they died and they're there for me to look at. I think everyone is interested by, like, freaks, it's just fascinating. We don't have today, because of like human rights issues, and all these things, you don't have circuses full of freaks, so we don't really see these things unless we go to India, but um, they're all there for you to see in one room. Like the Siamese twin cases, congenital twins, co-joined twins, is fascinating. It's so the same as us, yet so different that you just sort of shrink back from it.

There are two points of interest in this quote. First, she comments on the foreignness of seeing disease and deformity in the industrialized West. In contrast, in societies where physical deformity is more common, where the infirm inhabit the streets and markets, or where injury, or war, coupled with poor medical care, lay the body open in public spaces, a certain demystification of the body ensues. We see this here in the United States with our "invisible" homeless population. As Jane expresses, however, it is relatively rare in the developed world to encounter a cadaver, to see inside the body, or to encounter those with significant physical disfigurement. Even medical students in the US commonly enter medical school never having personally encountered serious illness, disfigurement, or death.

It is remarkable how successful developed societies are at hiding away the malformed, the diseased, the mentally challenged, the infirm elderly, the dying and the dead. A person who, for whatever reason, wanted to see, in person, a human spleen, or conjoined twins, or a dead body, would have no obvious vehicle for achieving that aim. For centuries certain professional groups have claimed and exercised exclusive access rights to the secret places of human embodiment – physicians, other clinical care providers, morticians, police, military personnel, and museum curators, for example. Our society expends much energy in creating specialized institutions, programs, and communities to segregate these categories of bodily presentation from the lived experience of the "ordinary" person.

The hidden nature of much human suffering and tragedy relates to the second observation from Jane's quote that, despite, or perhaps because of, the hiddenness of the misshapen, we are simultaneously repelled from them yet deeply curious. The penalty in removing these variations on the typical human form from popular view is that in hiding them away, they become, in essence, freaks, modern day unwitting and unwilling sideshow attractions. In other words, when the average person has no venue for seeing examples of pathological anatomy, in a society where publicly acknowledging their existence is taboo, putting them on display, which may even mean "watching one walk down the street," becomes enticing.

As a result, counter-institutions have risen up against these restrictive and segregating practices. World fairs, traveling circuses, and medical documentaries all result from our human desire to look at the other – the exotic Hottentot Venus, the giant and the dwarf together under Barnum's tent, or the miracle separation of the Thai conjoined twins at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (Dennett 1996; van Dijck 2002). In these settings the socially different (exotic foreigners, for example) and the medically different (conjoined twins and someone suffering from hypertrichosis, for example) are often treated similarly, as both fall under the rubric of the extraordinary. We also see links between the social and the medical in the metaphors used to describe societies. The somatic can become a metaphor for the well or dysfunctional workings of society, as for example when contemporary United States conservatives call liberalism a "cancer" on society that must be cut out or exterminated.

On an individual level, seeking out the medically extraordinary, at either the Mütter Museum or Body Worlds, Gunther von Hagens' world famous exhibition of artistically posed preserved bodies, for example, or "gawking contemplatively" (Garland-Thomson 1996) at an extraordinary body on the street, reflects more immediate concerns. For while we live in a society that has an increased knowledge of disease and its processes, we still know very little about why a particular person at a particular time is struck by disease, disfigurement, or disability. The fact that disease is still seemingly random provides a plausible explanation for setting rigid boundaries between the extraordinary body that is disease or disability anthropomorphized, and us, the "healthy" observer.

It has been suggested that the desire to look at extraordinary bodies is prurient and unwholesome, reflecting "an innate desire to behold other's misfortunes to therefore build our own self-confidence" (Dennett 1996). I am not convinced that all such looking is motivated by a desire to build confidence, or results in building self-confidence. This may be true in the extreme, but the desire to look at the extraordinary body and confront disfigurement and the extremes of human corporeality may be provocative and broadening (Garland-Thomson 2006). In suggesting this, Garland-Thomson is reversing the question, asking not (only) why we look, what we do when we look, and what happens to us when we look, but also what happens to the *objects* of the gaze. What is the role of and the effect on the "staree" in these visual "conversations"? It is telling that Garland-Thomson had to coin the term "staree," for there is no word for this person in English. Her reversal of the gaze, her emphasis on subjects looking back, releases the body from its status as a specimen or spectacle, and reinstates it as an interpretive subject, actively involved in the visual conversation. As at the Mütter, we do not just look at the displays. Rather, by their nature of shared yet distinct humanity, they seem to look back at us (Worden 2002).

When looking, we do not just address our gaze at objects, but we are looking always in relation to ourselves (Berger 1972). In this way viewing is an act that transcends the object being viewed and implicates the important power differentials at work. When we look without understanding, with only a dismissive, derogatory, or fearful response, we de-humanize and force a passivity upon the object of the gaze. Looking becomes a violent act (Radley 2002). As Barbara Kruger observed of the male gaze directed towards women, "Your gaze hits the side of my face." The able-bodied healthy gaze may provoke the same reaction.

And so I'd like to re-interpret Barbara Kruger's "Your gaze hits the side of my face." The act of looking at another might, and might very often, be malignant or violent, but it may also be benign, as in the work that the tender look of a lover might do. Violent or loving, the point is that the gaze is never passive. We may look in pity or anger, but however we look we are expressing intention. Directing a gaze is an active moment; a gaze strikes the side of my face; it alters me. This is implicit in Garland-Thomson's thesis that staring demands a response and engenders obligation. It promotes identification between viewer and viewed, a key step in the de-spectaclization of others.

How did we come to see the body as spectacle? While we have always looked, we used to look in wonder, and we saw revelations and ominous marvels; now we see error, seeing entertaining and gratuitous oddities (Garland-Thomson 1996). In addition to the development of medical science that provided alternative and authoritative explanations for such wonders as congenital abnormalities, changes in society as a whole as a consequence of modernity also drove this shift to spectacle. In pre-modern times, in small-scale kin-based communities, the story of the body and the person reflected each other (Barilan 2005). Social position and status were based on the long established divisions of labor and shared histories. Modern times, in contrast, are characterized by an anonymity that began in the early 1800s as people began moving away from families and communities of origin, sometimes migrating across vast distances, and increasingly settling in large urban metropolises. Lacking personal knowledge of one another, people rely on outward appearances as indices of identity and social position; thus the spectacle and the associated metaphors, assumptions, and value judgments give precedence to the body, over the person in the body.

And so we reach our third body, the body as patient, the postmodern body that (re) integrates the body and the person, that resists the specimenization and the spectaclization of medicine and popular culture. Through embodiment theory the body and the person are united, and it brings us to where ethics should be.

## The Body as Patient

My argument about the body as patient centers on the importance of understanding other worldviews, on what illness means to people, and thus on how they make decisions. Principle-based bioethics seeks to answer this final question without giving attention to the first two. It ignores the nitty-gritty, the complicated and often contradictory paths that bodies as patients take in favor of the still complicated but infinitely cleaner analysis of competing principles.

The best means to access this body as patient is in the stories patients themselves tell. Good argues that illness stories begin with the moment of symbolization, the initial diagnosis story told to the patient by the practitioner that sets the stage for the understanding of what and how illness has happened to the patient (Good 1994). These origin stories have immense power to set the stage and influence the patient's role on that stage. They can be quite deterministic, in the same way that people have been known to be cured of illness with a placebo regimen. What Good is pointing out, and it is implied in his use of the root "symbol," is that symbolization is not just a process of giving a patient the objective reality of her situation, of telling her what is

happening outside the cave. Symbolization creates shadow-causing entities, but then these shadows are interpreted by the patient herself from within the cave.

Implicated in this symbolization is power. As the act of giving a diagnosis is not (only) a reflection of what the practitioner sees in her tests and examinations, but an invocation for the patient of new ways of thinking of oneself and of being in the world, the author of that symbolization holds immense power over the worldview and identity of the patient. For what this means to the patient, I would like to make an analogy to what the "writing culture" anthropologists of the 1980s did for the practice of ethnographic fieldwork and writing (Clifford and Marcus 1986). These theorists postulated that the source of knowledge about foreign cultures was not an anthropologist with a photographic and X-ray gaze to the culture, but was the result of a particular anthropologist in a particular time observing particular people and writing selective aspects of their observations in a particular way. Ethnographic accounts of distant peoples were not questioned until other anthropologists visited those same places and saw something different or when members of the groups under study read and commented on the ethnographies. In the same way, patients did not question practitioner's symbolization until their own experiences did not resonate. And this dissonance between patient experience and practitioner symbolization is a condition of our postmodern times.

In small scale pre-modern societies, symbolization came from the collective body of knowledge about health and illness. The originator of the symbolization, the medicine-man, shaman, or mother, lived in the same culture as the "patient," they shared terminology, ideology, and expectations. There was a resonance between patient experience and practitioner symbolization. With the introduction of modern medicine to pre-modern societies, the terminology, ideology, and expectations implicit in the symbolization come from outside the local, from a geographic, but more importantly, an ideological, elsewhere (Frank 1995). Patients became unmoored. Frank relates an example of this unmooring in the story told by Pierre Bourdieu of a North African tribal woman who contrasted the "old days" to the contemporary days of having doctors in town. Before, this woman said, "folk didn't know what illness was. They went to bed and they died. It's only nowadays that we've learned words like liver, lung, stomach, and I don't know what!" (Frank 1995: 5). Frank puts much import in the "and I don't know what" ending to this sentence. It illustrates how medical story-telling in modernity begins to be taken over by the medical worldview. The modern illness story is a narrative surrender by the patient in which the practitioner becomes the spokesperson for the disease, and the patient, under the power of symbolization, comes to depend heavily on what the practitioner has said.

In the early years of modern medicine, however, advances in acute care meant that the benefits of this mode of patient-hood were immediate, and patient stories were in line with practitioner symbolization. The costs only became apparent as the development of medicine led to increasing numbers of people stuck in a limbo of chronic care (Frank 1995). The effect on symbolization and story-telling in this shift in type of care is analogous to the native reading the classic ethnography of her tribe and finding the representation completely unfamiliar, foreign. This is the postmodern situation that has led to the need for counter-practitioner, counter-body as specimen, symbolization stories. Chronic pain epitomizes the body as patient in this postmodern era of medicine where chronic care dominates. There are no objective tests or internal imaging

that can find chronic pain: it resists specimenization. Chronic pain unmakes one's world (Good 1994), turning the body-self in chronic pain into an object; my body is no longer me, it's something else, I don't know what it is. My body is a now (also) an object with its own agency, attacking the self. The integrated self is no longer in charge, but this other thing, that is simultaneously me and not me, is. Chronic pain sufferers have lost both their map and their destination.

The maps of modern medicine show two countries, the sick and well. Chronic pain, however, exists in neither of these. The chronic pain sufferer is a citizen of sick, but without the shared cultural markers of clinical or phenotypical markers of difference, and a citizen of well by negative definition due to lack of diagnosis or prognosis. Stories are a means to colonize new land, to move beyond this liminality, and to remap the world. Patient narratives reclaim the personal voice that was lost when illness narrative became medical story.

This is what Good calls narrativization, the process of how an individual integrates the symbolization, which provides an answer to the "where" and "how" questions, into their own worldview based on the stories they tell to themselves and others about why something is happening, addressing the "why me" and "why now" questions (Good 1994). Narrativization may give patients new destinations and the start of a map of how to get there, but socially, chronic conditions are still alienating. Sufferers find that trying to explain chronic pain to others is impossible. It is a condition so foreign that the words, already inadequate descriptors for lived experience, for illness and pain, while eloquent in symptoms, are inarticulate in words (Frank 1995: 2). Because of this they literally don't make sense to the listener. Listeners then, in not believing the words, do not believe the speaker.

Thus the importance of engaging patient narratives. A first step is to recognize that these are not stories *about* illness, but are embodied stories, told *through* an ill body (Frank 1995). Whereas stories about illness are plot-driven, embodied stories, stories through illness, are character-driven. It is no wonder that both medicine and bioethics are only slowly beginning to incorporate narratives and other medical humanities. Patient records and bioethics case studies are plot-based (Chambers 2001), and this is how doctors and bioethicists are enculturated to listen. They may also not be present to listen to embodied stories as they take place in non-medical settings. In demanding to speak and not be spoken for, patients cannot tell their embodied stories in a medical setting: for postmodern patients, with postmodern chronic illness, the stories find no footing in the modern space of the hospital or clinic.

Illness stories are more broadly social, they are social acts. What this means is that telling stories is a social event. Even for those patients who write their stories, instead of or in addition to speaking them, they do so with the idea that someone will read their story, and that it will enter the social pool of stories others can use to draw from. To say that patient stories are social refers as well to the fact that the shape and form of the story and the metaphors and language of the story are all artifacts of the social (Frank 1995). Each of us has spent our lives listening to stories of illness and telling our own stories. We have learned how they work in different settings – our story as told to the doctor versus to our family, or through different channels such as poetry, film, even YouTube. Searching for "illness stories" on YouTube yields pages upon pages of memorial videos, children whose too-short lives are documented and memorialized in word, image, and music, available for anyone to see. Patients also use the

Internet while alive, blogging about their experiences, fears, hope, and struggles. Authors of these illness narratives are using modern technology to tell their stories in their way, finding audiences for their stories, and through these activities forging new paths forward in their life's remapping.

Narrativization necessitates appearing before and with others, of being in a social space. Giving accounts, telling stories, is part of dealing with disease. But what are the roles and duties of the listener? We, all of us, bioethicists, practitioners, and laypeople, need to learn the art of ethical listening and witnessing. "Regular" listening, simply following the plot, involves no ethical investment. What makes listening ethical is the attention to character, recognizing the suffering of the other through a "transmutation" of feeling (Radley 2002). As Frank so eloquently wrote:

> One of our most difficult duties as human beings is to listen to the voices of those who suffer. The voices of the ill are easy to ignore, because these voices are often faltering in tone and mixed in message, particularly in their spoken form before some editor has rendered them fit for reading by the healthy. These voices bespeak conditions of embodiment that most of us would rather forget our own vulnerability to. Listening is hard, but it is also a fundamental moral act; to realize the best potential in postmodern times requires an ethics of listening. I hope to show that in listening for the other, we listen for ourselves. The moment of witness in the story crystallizes a mutuality of need, when each is *for* the other. (Frank 1995: 25)

Frank's quote highlights the importance of reflexivity: looking to ourselves to understand our own positioning and ideological guideposts and barriers to recognizing suffering in others. The simultaneous acts of paying attention to others' stories and critically reflecting upon our own processes of interpretation are imperative components of an embodied ethics.

## Conclusion: An Embodied, Enlivened, Bioethics

An embodied ethics brings two important transformations to bioethics, currently dominated by a normative and principle-based tradition. First, an embodied ethics leads us to ask new types of questions. In the realm of organ transplantation, for example, bioethicists overwhelmingly focus on how to increase the supply of organs for donation, on rethinking the parameters of organ compatibility, and the issues of compensating organ donors and their families. Bodies in these discussions appear only as the carriers of organs. Shifting our gaze to questions of embodiment, identity, and the daily realities of the bodies-in-action-in-context brings us instead to the concerns and preoccupations of the recipients and donors themselves and provides a more holistic and grounded view of organ transplant practices (Jones 2009). Replacing the body as the vessel of organs with embodied donors and recipients redirects bioethicists to ask questions about changes in embodiment while waiting for an organ, the meaning of living with a transplanted organ, and about the relationships between donors and recipients.

Second, an embodied ethics focuses not only on the embodiment of the patient, but also on the embodiment of all the stakeholders in medicine. It shines a reflexive light on the social processes that lead practitioners to focus on the specimen and the

public to focus on the spectacle. It changes the way we see the relationships among selves, bodies, and illness. In so doing it opens a way forward to a more genuine and more generally healthful engagement between people and all that modern medical technology has to offer today, in a way that does not marginalize the body to specimen but brings it to the center of care and holds it at the center of our attention.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Pamela Sankar for her feedback on early drafts of this chapter, and the University of Pennsylvania Master of Bioethics students in my Spring 2010 Anthropology of the Body course, whose stimulating discussions informed this chapter.

## REFERENCES

Anonymous, 1969 139 Heads Are Better Than One. Philadelphia Magazine. 60: 41.

Barilan, Y. M., 2005 The Story of the Body and the Story of the Person: Towards an Ethics of Representing Human Bodies and Body-Parts. Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy 8: 193–205.

Becker, H., 1961 Boys in White. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Berg, M. and P. Harterink, 2004 Embodying the Patient: Records and Bodies in Early 20th-century US Medical Practice. Body and Society 10(2–3): 13–41.

Berger, J., 1972 Ways of Seeing. London, British Broadcasting Corporation and Penguin Books.

Campbell, A., 2009 The Body in Bioethics. New York, Routledge.

Chambers, T., 2001 The Fiction of Bioethics: A Precis. The American Journal of Bioethics 1(1): 40–43.

Clifford, J. and G. Marcus, eds., 1986 Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography. Berkeley, University of California Press.

Dennett, A. S., 1996 The Dime Museum Freak Show Reconfigured as Talk Show. *In* Freakery: Cultural Spectacles of the Extraordinary Body. R. Garland-Thomson, ed. pp. 315–326. New York: New York University Press.

Dumit, J., 1999 Objective Brains, Prejudicial Images. Science in Context 12(1): 173–201.

Foucault, M., 1983 This is Not a Pipe. Berkeley, University of California Press.

Frank, A., 1995 The Wounded Storyteller: Body, Illness, and Ethics. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Garland-Thomson, R., 1996 Introduction: From Wonder to Error – A Genealogy of Freak Discourse in Modernity. *In* Freakery: Cultural Spectacles of the Extraordinary Body. R. Garland-Thomson, ed. New York: New York University Press.

Garland-Thomson, R., 2006 Ways of Staring. Journal of Visual Culture 5(2): 173–92.

Good, B. J., 1994 Medicine, Rationality, and Experience: An Anthropological Perspective. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jones, N., 2009 The Importance of Embodiment in Transplant Ethics. *In* The Penn Center Guide to Bioethics. Vardit Ravitsky, Autumn Fiester, and Arthur L. Caplan, eds. New York: Springer Publishing Company.

Joyce, K., 2006 From Numbers to Pictures: The Development of Magnetic Resonance Imaging and the Visual Turn in Medicine. Science as Culture 15(1): 1–22.

Lesage, J., 2006 Terri Schiavo and the Media. eJump Cut.org. http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc48.2006/docIntro/index.html, accessed November 3, 2010.

Radley, A., 2002 Portrayals of Suffering: On Looking Away, Looking At, and the Comprehension of the Illness Experience. Body and Society 8(3): 1–23.

Satkoske, V., 2010 The Anemic Narrative: Will the Electronic Health Record Reduce the Patient to a Footnote? Paper presented at the Pennsylvania Medical Humanities Consortium: Through the Lens of Time: Perspectives on Medicine and Health Care. Philadelphia.

Scheper-Hughes, N. and M. Lock, 1987 The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work in Medical Anthropology. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 1(1): 6–41.

Shildrick, M. and R. Mykitiuk, eds., 2005 Ethics of the Body: Postconventional Challenges. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.

Stern, J., 1978 Amazing America. New York: Random House.

van Dijck, J., 2002 Medical Documentary: Conjoined Twins as a Mediated Spectacle. Media, Culture and Society 24: 537–556.

Worden, G., 2002 The Mutter Museum: Of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia. New York: Blast Books.

CHAPTER 5

# BIOPOWER
## *Biopower and Cyberpower in Online News*

*Dominic Boyer*

"Biopower" in Foucault's original schematization (1990: 143), in the elaborations of his philosophical and sociological interlocutors (e.g., Agamben 1998, Deleuze 1995; Hardt and Negri 2000; Rabinow and Rose 2006), and in the recent work of many anthropologists (e.g., Beck 2007; Biehl 2007; Briggs 2005; Cohen 2005; Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Franklin and Roberts 2006; Fullwiley 2006; Greenhalgh and Winckler 2005; Inda 2005; Lakoff and Collier 2008; Petryna 2002; Redfield 2005; Sunder Rajan 2007), signals the consolidation of concepts of life, sexuality and population as the objects of modern governance and statecraft. Perhaps "objects" is not quite the right word here, rather "methods." In a discussion of the related concept, "governmentality," Foucault shows that life and population are both means and ends of modern power: "population comes to appear above all else as the ultimate end of government. In contrast to sovereignty, government has as its purpose not the act of government itself, but the welfare of the population, the improvement of its condition, the increase of its wealth, longevity, health, and so on; and the means the government uses to attain these ends are themselves all, in some sense, immanent to the population" (Foucault 2000b: 216–217). Foucault's approach denies the singularity and separability of the means and ends, causes and effects, bodies and knowledges, instruments and environments, and, of course, subjects and objects of modern power. But neither is he satisfied with a dialectical portrait of contingency in which subject–object relationality is held in a kind of mutually constitutive dynamic tension. No, Foucault is thinking at the level of networks. His model of modern power is foundationally that of a network of linkages, nodes, and elements, which really cannot be analytically reduced below the level of a circuitry of forces and signs, in other words, the "apparatus" (*dispositif*) as a "system of

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

relations" between "heterogeneous elements" including corporeality, ethics, discourse, institutions, laws, administrative procedures, scientific knowledge (Foucault 1980). In other words, "*pouvoir–savoir.*"

In this respect, Foucault's concept of biopower can be viewed as an extension and refinement of his general model of power. In *Discipline and Punish*, for example, he contrasts the distributed, discursive, and productive nature of modern power from the more centralized, excessive, and repressive character of sovereign power (Foucault 1979). Then, in the *History of Sexuality*, Foucault defines biopower as a discursive concentration on sexuality, reproduction and life: "*bio-power* … designate[s] what brought life and its mechanisms into the realm of explicit calculations and made knowledge-power an agent of the transformation of human life" (1990: 143). Rather than a Victorian "repression" of sexuality, Foucault stresses the relentless signaling, voicing, policing and measurement of sexual instincts and activities during the Victorian period as the biopolitical organization of modern governance became increasingly sophisticated and detailed in its operation. He proposes biopower not as an alternative theory of power but rather as an analytics of power that traces its circuits and nodes of operation. Although he does not put it quite so bluntly, Foucault clearly views the Victorian repression theory as a kind of sovereign "surplus" of theoretical causality that misunderstands and thus misrepresents the distributed organization of modern power. In the same vein, in his essay on "The Subject and Power" Foucault advocates a distributed method of "analytical work" to the centralized authority of a "theory of power" (Foucault 2000a: 327).

## Biopower, Governmentality, Online News

Given this definition of biopower, online news does not seem an immediately obvious place to look for its operation. For one thing, as Mark Poster notes, "Foucault did not write about new media in any of its possible meanings; even the term 'media' rarely if ever appears in his corpus" (Poster 2008). On the other hand, one could certainly locate a biopolitical apparatus at work in online news discourse concerning life, sexuality, reproduction, and health (see, e.g., Briggs and Nichter 2009), but these are not my topics in this essay. The digital mediation of biopolitical *content* is certainly an important phenomenon in its own right, but I can think of at least two other ways that online news makes an unusual but illuminating platform from which to stage an intervention into Foucault's concept of biopower.

First, more substantively, news mediation has been a powerful organizational force in the discourse networks of modern governance, part of what helped to integrate and publicize the emergent relations of power / knowledge with which Foucault is concerned. Indeed, online news, as an example of news mediation more generally, addresses a significant lacuna in Foucault's work on biopower and governmentality. It is striking that for the deeply semiological nature of his social theory, and for all his concern with "discourse" as a constitutional force, that Foucault had little to say about the operation of media in his historical analysis of the rise of modern power, especially in terms of the rise of a principle of population into the means / ends of modern power. Media are strangely absent features of Foucault's articulation of both biopower and governmentality despite the fact that as Jürgen Habermas, Benedict Anderson and Michael Warner (among other theorists of modernity) have all argued

that modern social and political subjectivity has been deeply informed by the technologies and circuits of mediated discourse. I wish to probe the relationship between "population" and "publicity" here and to suggest that the premise of the latter has been historically essential for the solidification and legitimacy of the biopolitics of the former. Then, turning finally to the contemporary, I discuss how digital media and digital publicity have emerged as crucial institutions of contemporary biopolitics and governmentality since the 1980s.

Second, I contend that juxtaposing the explicitly informatic self-understanding and concerns of online news professionals with Foucault's concept helps to reveal certain cryptoinformatic and cryptocybernetic sensibilities that inform Foucault's entire analytic method. I wish to demonstrate that a deep "cyberpolitical" imagination infuses and authorizes categories like "biopower" as part of my general project to outline what I term, somewhat tongue in cheek, the "cybernetic unconscious" at work in postwar social theory, including very notably French post-structuralism.

## News Media, Modern Publicity, Biopower

If the rise of biopower in Foucault's original conceptualization is linked to an entire epistemic and political apparatus invested in the management of life, reproduction and population, then it is difficult to avoid seeing a connection between biopower and forms of media and social communication like the news. How else, to put it bluntly, could biopolitical discourse be made public and operationalized in an efficacious way? Instead, Foucault writes, for example, of anatomopolitics and biopolitics:

> It was at the pivot of the two axes along which developed the entire political technology of life. On the one hand it was tied to the disciplines of the body: the harnessing, intensification and distribution of forces, the adjustment and economy of energies. On the other hand, it was applied to the regulation of populations, through all the far-reaching effects of its activity … Spread out from one pole to the other of this technology of sex was a whole series of different tactics that combined in varying proportions the objective of disciplining the body and that of regulating populations (Foucault 1990: 145–146).

Where a discussion of media or mediation might be expected, Foucault's analytical work normally retreats into the passive voice at some moments (e.g., "was tied," "was applied") and asserts the systematicity of phenomenon at others (e.g., "a whole series of different tactics," "economy of energies"). My point is not to cast doubt on or aspersion at Foucault's writing or analytical method but rather to show that there is something significantly unspoken in Foucault's portrait of the emergence of modern power. His recognition of the technologies and techniques of modern power-knowledge is quite clear; his argument for how these technologies and techniques became efficacious and public is less so. At issue, ultimately, is how to connect "population" and "public" within a Foucauldian framework of biopower.

It seems to me that the problem of mediation is not a trivial one. Moreover, it has been a central concern of other theorists of modernity who have sought to discuss the relationship between media and public formation as an essential feature of the emergence

of modern political and social subjectivity. Jürgen Habermas, clearly influenced by earlier iterations of the Frankfurt School (e.g., Benjamin 1968; Horkheimer and Adorno 1972), was perhaps the first social theorist of many to make the link between print media and modern publicity concretely.

Habermas portrays the rise of modern publicity in early modern Europe in the context of a familiar historical struggle between the social activities and interests of the middle classes and state power. Habermas has been remembered and criticized (among others, by Foucault himself) for his vision of *Öffentlichkeit* (publicity, the public sphere) as a space of private critical-rational debate and ideational exchange somehow insulated from both bourgeois commercial interest and the power of (aristocratic) state authority. There is surely a powerful tendency toward idealization in Habermas's vision, for example when he narrates the bourgeois public sphere's later invasion by market and commodity logics: "When the laws of the market governing the sphere of commodity exchange and of social labor also pervaded the sphere reserved for private people as a public, rational-critical debate has a tendency to be replaced by consumption, and the web of public communication unraveled into acts of individuated reception, however uniform in mode" (Habermas 1989: 161) or "The public sphere in the world of letters was replaced by the pseudo-public or sham-private world of culture consumption" (Habermas 1989: 160). Indeed, Habermas's entire theory of communicative action is premised on the notion that critical rationality is an emancipatory social force and that it can be restored to a steering function in modern society (Habermas 1984, 1987).

Nevertheless, we should recognize that Habermas's bourgeois public sphere is also a relational, historically dynamic entity. He does not argue for a self-organizing public (of the "autotelic" kind proposed by Michael Warner (2002: 51)) spontaneously generated by middle-class intellectual activity itself. Nor does he argue, in the manner of Marshall McLuhan (1994) perhaps, that print literacy automatically gave rise to a new set of cultural forms and forces, among them enlightened critical-rationality. Instead, Habermas links the historical possibility of the bourgeois public sphere both to the translocalization of middle-class economic power ("the traffic in commodities" 1989: 16) and to the extension and intensification of informational exchange that accompanied typography and serialization ("the traffic in news"). Serialized news was driven from the beginning by commercial interest in translocal market information but it helped stimulate literacy and the development of institutionalized pathways for print media production and circulation that would later become more diversely purposed, including not least the genesis of a "world of letters" (1989: 51). Nevertheless, none of this was sufficient to guarantee the modern form of publicity. Habermas argues that "the public" was actually called into form by the instrumentalization of the press by early modern states in the effort to solidify their governance: "The interest of the new (state) authorities (which before long began to use the press for the purposes of the state administration), however, was of far greater import. Inasmuch as they made use of this instrument to promulgate instructions and ordinances, the addresses of the authorities' announcements genuinely became 'the public' in the proper sense" (1989: 21). State authorities, according to Habermas, "evoked a resonance leading the *publicum*, the abstract counterpart of public authority, into an awareness of itself as the latter's opponent, that is, as the public of the now emerging *public sphere of civil society*" (1989: 23). In a sense, the bourgeois public sphere was called into being by the very state authority that it came to oppose.

Here we find a connection between governance over population and public formation, however implicit. Unfortunately, Habermas is just as cryptic as to the doubtless biopolitical content of many of these state instructions, ordinances, and announcements as Foucault is about how biopower was made public. But I do not think it such a leap of faith to see that the two discussions are deeply related and indeed that each voices, to some extent, the other's silences. The modern public is the addressee of biopolitical governance as well as, as noted above, its medium and legitimating fiction. The existence of a public enables operations upon a population precisely by enrolling that population discursively into a politics of life. As Warner explains, the modern public is curiously personal and impersonal at the same time; as a "relation among strangers" (2002: 55) and "circulation among indefinite others" (2002: 87), one is always addressed as part of a population rather than in one's personal and bodily singularity (2002: 59). Warner emphasizes that both textuality and circularity are essential discursive features of the modern public: "A public might be real and efficacious, but its reality lies in just this reflexivity by which an addressable object is conjured into being in order to enable the very discourse that gives it existence" (2002: 51).

Warner's discussion mediates effectively, if incompletely, between Habermas's vision of the public as a space of critical-rational ideation and Foucault's insistence upon biopower as an autotelic system of forces and signs. The missing element, to my mind, is an accounting for nationalism as the *specific* kind of publicity that legitimates and enables modern governance in the form of statecraft. Here, Benedict Anderson's historical study of creole nationalism in the Americas is illuminating. Again, contrary to some criticism, a generic force of "print capitalism" is not the entirety of Anderson's explanation for the rise of a modern sense of national "imagined community." The particular social and political conditions of New World colonialism were likewise essential insofar as the more remote influence of European sovereign and sacred authorities, the polarization of metropolitans and creoles, and European absolutism's emphasis upon the "internal interchangeability of men and documents" (Anderson 1991: 55) all combined to set colonial functionaries and intellectuals into motion in ways that created a phenomenological basis for a new publicity based on individual interchangeability, standard language registers, and territorial domain.

For Anderson, the provincial newspaper was a key institution in the process of translating colonial elite motion into discursive national imagination. These newspapers' circulation of information on a provincial basis helped to constitute a distinctively creole discourse environment. More than this, "the very conception of the newspaper implies the refraction of even 'world events' into a specific imagined world of vernacular readers; and also how important to that imagined community is an idea of steady, solid simultaneity through time" (Anderson 1991: 63). The provincial colonial newspaper is, for Anderson, a key vehicle for establishing a modern sense of social belonging as a part of a sociological organism moving through linear time. Modern newspapers followed suit, contributing to the articulation and stabilization of modern national publicity. Such news media take for granted shared experience, shared language, shared territoriality, all these roots of modern conceptions of "culture." They may indeed address, in a formal sense, an audience of "strangers" and "others" but they also assume and articulate a certain intimacy among these strangers under the sign of national culture. In this respect, I think it is fair to describe news media as important co-constitutors of the operations of modern biopower. Failing the centralized

authority and excessive character of sovereign power, biopower needs national intimacy and national publicity in order to operate effectively. Biopower does not stand as a unified force outside of social and cultural life, but rather invests "life through and through" (Foucault 1984: 139). This is not to say that force is distributed entirely equally across the biopolitical apparatus – Foucault seems well aware of the nodal powers of institutions. Rather, it is to say that for a population of citizens to submit itself to efficient biopolitical management (as opposed to being forced into submission by a sovereign authority), national publicity (with its continuous appeals to intimacy and belonging) seems to me unavoidable. And, in keeping with the analytical work advanced by Habermas, Warner and Anderson it seems impossible not to recognize the role of media generally (and news media specifically) in helping to sustain the intimate circulation of modern publicity.

## Digital Publicity, Cyberpower

Unless, of course, everything is now changing. Which is a narrative that we have heard increasingly since the historical emergence and proliferation of digital technologies of information and communication. I will not address here the common arguments for digital media revolution in depth (see Boyer 2007) but how digital circulation affects intimacy and publicity arises as an important problem. Warner observes, for example, that the Internet is exerting a transformational force upon modern publicity, and emphasizes how the fast-time temporality of digital mediation disrupts the "punctual" temporality upon which the reflexivity of modern publicity depended:

> Once a Web site is up, it can be hard to tell how recently it was posted or revised, or how long it will continue to be posted. Most sites are not archived. For the most part, they are not centrally indexed. The reflexive apparatus of Web discourse consists mostly of hypertext links and search engines, and these are not punctual. So although there are exceptions… the extent to which developments in technology will be assimilable to the temporal framework of public discourse remains unclear. If the change of infrastructure continues at this pace, and if modes of apprehension change accordingly, the absence of punctual rhythms may make it very difficult to connect localized acts of reading to the modes of agency that prevail within the social imaginary of modernity. It may even be necessary to abandon "circulation" as an analytic category (Warner 2002: 69).

What is striking in Warner's statement is his concern about the open-endedness of digital communications, particularly hyperlinks that can create endless discursive travel without the hope of an all-encompassing archive or index to orient oneself. Warner was, of course, writing in the pre-Google era but he expresses very well broader popular and especially intellectual anxieties at digital informational excess. And he is right to stress that the rapid, fluid and mobile character of digital communications destabilizes to some extent the intimacy of the Habermasian-Andersonian "reading public" in which a more or less clear field and stable pattern of circulating texts helped bolster reflexive awareness of their shared social belonging.

But rather than imagining digital publicity as marking a fundamental disruption of modern publicity, we might also view it as a reorganization of that publicity in terms of temporality, circuitry, and agency. Christopher Kelty has proposed, for example,

the concept of "recursive public" as a "social imaginary specific to the Internet" in which participants "address each other by addressing the very means (the Internet) of address itself" Kelty 2005: 186, 200). His argument is built upon his ethnography of the open source software movement, in which the operability of both software and social networks allows for continuous intervention into the conditions of discourse themselves, "A recursive public can not only propose changes that should be made in the future (as an employee in a corporation might) but actually make those changes to the software and let others test whether the change is fruitful" (Kelty 2005: 201). Recursive publics are thus clearly reflexive, but they routinely extend their reflexivity beyond textual circulation, even hypertextual circulation, and into the manipulation of flexible technologies of communication. In informatic terms, they are reflexive not only with respect to *message* but also with respect to *code*. "To include the activities of building, coding, compiling, patching, hacking, redistributing, and sharing software code and networking tools under the banner of discourse is the first step toward understanding how the definition of a social imaginary is transformed by the Internet" (2005: 200). Kelty's argument is provocative and may well be prescient but it remains the case for the moment that it is unclear to what extent recursive publicity effectively extends beyond those who have the technical skill, access and expertise to take advantage of the recursive potentialities of digital communications. Even online news professionals who operate in dense digital environments rarely concern themselves directly with programming or reformatting technical instruments of discourse. They are, however, much as Kelty might surmise, very much interested in how digital communications have transformed the informational environment of society and particularly in how they have reframed the role of journalists as a particular kind of informatic node within modern publicity.

These concerns, which I expand on in more depth below, intersect very well with Charles Briggs and Mark Nichter's recent diagnosis of how the Internet and other digital media are reconfiguring the discursive operation of "biocommunicability" (the production, circulation and reception of biomedical knowledge; Briggs 2005: 275). They argue that, on the one hand, digital mediation contributes valuable new layers of circuitry to the biopolitical surveillance of neoliberal states over health and disease. Yet, they observe that digital mediation also offers new instruments for the inverse surveillance of states by civilians and non-governmental institutions:

> This greater access to the Internet, cell phones, and other communication devices also provides new opportunities for surveillance that may contribute to both social control and democracy projects on a global scale. … On the one hand, an increasing number of circuits for communicating about health expand opportunities for the exercise of biopower in a neoliberal state, encouraging personal responsibility for health. The Internet also affords new opportunities for panopticon-like surveillance of all manner of activities. On the other hand, it also provides an opportunity for activities that comprise synopticons, forms of inverse surveillance of the state by civilians, or of governments by international watchdog groups having agendas that serve global public health citizenship. New forms of technology permit citizens to monitor the activities of officials in the public and private spheres. (Briggs and Nichter 2009: 196)

This synoptical field has been referred to elsewhere as "cyberpolitics" (Hill and Hughes 1998) and Briggs and Nichter are entirely correct to juxtapose the

cyberpolitical and the biopolitical in such an explicitly reciprocal way. "Cyberpower," albeit in a narrower sense than that proposed by Tim Jordan (1999: 2–9), may be conceptually valuable as a way of designating the critical role of mobile digital publicity in mediating, to stay within a Foucauldian frame, contemporary *pouvoir–savoir*. In this sense, I wish to argue that cyberpolitical imaginaries and subjectivities are becoming intrinsically vital features of contemporary biopolitics, just as other scholars have observed the increasing coordination of digital discourse and practice with late liberalism (e.g., Coleman and Golub 2008). I read Kelty's recursive publicity as an excellent example of one mode of digital publicity and cyberpolitical subjectivity. Digital circuits of communicability, given their plurality and temporality, stage more intimate and frequent exchanges between biopolitical individuality and biopolitical governance. But to understand the scale and impact of cyberpower we need more frontline ethnography of their zones of intersection.

I turn now to my own recent ethnography of online news practice in Germany and the United States to deepen our understanding of one such zone. That is, I wish to explore how cyberpolitical social imaginaries and subjectivities among online news journalists are informing and transforming practices and institutions of digital publicity.

## Platform, Content, User: An Outline of Online Cyberpolitical Discourse and Practice

The impact of the digital information and communication technologies (ICT) upon news journalism over the past twenty years has been extraordinary and constitutes a larger and more complex story than I can tell here (see, e.g., Klinenberg 2005). Since digital ICT have become industrially standard in all Western news production centers over the past generation, the daily practice of news journalism has become thoroughly informatic in its orientation, leading to a rise in what has been termed "sedentary journalism" (Baisnée and Marchetti 2006) and a gradual reorientation of much news practice from reporting toward informational aggregation and filtering. As one senior German news journalist explained this shift to me in 2008:

> the amount of information on the same topics is growing explosively. And that brings the journalist into a role that he perhaps did not have before, namely … to tell me what of this information is really important, what is believable and what is trustworthy. Before, it was more the role of the journalist to publish something that without his research would not have existed, but today the role is increasingly to evaluate the material that others are generating. And to organize it. For, the end-consumer is still the way he always was, with limited time and with limited competence.

Internet or "online" news has become a key locus of cyberpolitical imagination and transformation over the past fifteen years. Journalists working in and with digital media, especially in Europe and North America, have increasingly come to establish specialized professional networks, institutions and identities for themselves. Almost every Western news organization has developed an online department or web initiative, ranging from a few journalists dedicated to maintaining a website to organization-reshaping multimedia strategies. There is likewise a vibrant blogosphere (see, e.g.,

http://deepblog.com), now devoted to online journalism, citizen journalism, participatory media and news blogging and podcasting, in which the future of journalism is frequently debated and cyberpolitical discourse elaborated and honed. An annual North American online news conference was founded in the late 1990s, which gradually evolved into the Online News Association (http://journalists.org), an international professional organization that claims over 1,600 professional and associated members in 2010 and that offers a succinct cyberpolitical manifesto on its website: "We believe that the Internet is the most powerful communications medium to arise since the dawn of television. As digital delivery systems become the primary source of news for a growing segment of the world's population, it presents complex challenges and opportunities for journalists as well as the news audience."

Indeed, the manifesto form is a crucial feature of cyberpolitical discourse among onliners. Two themes circulated throughout the plethora of manifestos for online, citizen and participatory news that appeared during the 1990s and 2000s and structured their rhetoric and argument. The first was the inevitability, irreversibility and absoluteness of the digital information revolution. The second was the emancipatory potential of digital news to destabilize the microsovereign power of the professional journalist and to replace it with a (more democratic) network of linkages between informed and informing citizens. In the U.S. version of this discourse, the manifestos are unsurprisingly saturated with a late liberal conviction in autological subjectivity (Povinelli 2006) and with a rich, varied neoliberal discourse on immanent market powers such as consumer ("user") demand, producer asset optimalization and the values-added of various forms of product ("content") distribution (see, e.g., http://www.buzzmachine.com).

A well-articulated and influential example of these cyberpolitical interventions is a post by blogger-scholar Jay Rosen (2006) on "The People Formerly Known as the Audience." As is often the case, the addressee is less the cyberpolitical citizen of the future-present so much as the sovereign "Big Media" journalist who is alerted to his/her growing anachronism and irrelevance in the age of digital publicity:

Publisher's Note:
Text not available
in the electronic edition

Publisher's Note:
Text not available
in the electronic edition

Rosen's post speaks to the heart of what Raymond Williams once characterized as the paradox of broadcasting as it developed historically as a social organization of communication within market-capitalist Western society: that is, the juxtaposition of expensive centralized production with privatized reception (Williams 1974: 23–4). The two finance schemes that sustained Western broadcasting for most of the 20th century, advertising revenue and subscription fees, have indeed both been significantly destabilized by the rise of the Internet and the fracturing of Habermasian-Andersonian broadcast publics. Yet, Williams's study also undermines the revolutionary singularity articulated by Rosen and others. Williams's analysis of the technological and institutional development of television broadcasting emphasizes how electronic communication (what we would now call "digital media") developed first in what I term "lateral" patterns of point-to-point messaging, particularly in the military. It was only later that "radial" patterns of hub-spokes messaging from broadcast centers to portable reception devices developed as a political and commercial response to what Williams terms "mobile privatization" (an increasing trend toward mobility and domesticity in industrialized Western society; Williams 1974: 19). In this respect, the lateral potentiality of Internet-based electronic mediation (it also retains a radial potentiality: think Google) could be seen less as an unprecedented transformation of electronic communication than as a rebalancing of two potentialities that were always present in some proportion. This actually fits well with the emancipation narratives' sense of a restoration of lost democracy in the digital era, but it is important to emphasize that online cyberpolitical discourse tends to be relatively uninvested in historical and institutional arrangements of the kinds presented by Williams (and Foucault). Instead, their language turns around autological subjectivity (users), informational essence (content), and technological power (mediums, platforms). As noted above, this is generally true among European and North American onliners, but particularly so in the latter case. My German interlocutors certainly deployed a very similar language to their American counterparts. But they were also more apt to recognize that traditional broadcasting was far from dead and that it continued to represent a higher status mode of journalistic activity. When I asked a *Chef vom*

*Dienst* (assistant managing editor, approximately) at one of Germany's largest online news portals whether he identified himself as an onliner or not, he nodded but hedged this subjectivity by saying, "I don't think it's a secret that all of us would rather be working for a respected national newspaper rather than for a national online-portal, if we had the choice: the newspapers in Germany are very highly respected [*sehr renommiert*]."

It is difficult to estimate the depth and scale of digital publicity but, much like the Internet itself, which currently defies any precise measure of its size and number of participants, digital publicity certainly seems massive. One international database contained the names of over 19,000 online news organizations in 2006 (Deuze 2008: 199). Moreover, many journalists who would not willingly identify themselves as "onliners" have become, both by necessity and by inclination, skilled in the use of a wide variety of digital media technologies. Self-identifying onliners nonetheless tend to present themselves as bringing distinct transformational expertise to more traditional news organizations and audiences. They emphasize especially how their constant exposure to and engagement with digital information has given them an especially intimate understanding of the complex lateral networks of digital information flow. The head of the online department of a German public broadcaster explained:

> I believe that onliners' special nonlinear knowledge [*nichtlineäres Wissen*], which others do not share; the others have linear knowledge. "*Das Sein prägt ja das Bewußtsein*," – "being imprints consciousness" – this old Marxist principle is right in that respect. Organizations need this knowledge of nonlinearity and this knowledge of the complexity of information packets. That they need to be logically structured in a nonlinear space or otherwise they cannot be found.

Onliners often feel that they understand problems of informational architecture and circulation better than other journalists because they *live* the complexity of information in their digital media practices. Information is not only an object or resource for them but in every respect a practical knowledge that anchors their special identity and social importance, especially in an era in which news media organizations are becoming increasingly multimedial and real-time in their productivity.

Indeed, one thing that has become immensely clear in the observational part of my field research in newsrooms is to what extent the corporeality of online expertise (Boyer 2005) and the complex taskscape of online practice is dominated by the visual attention of screenwork. Even more so than other news journalists in the digital age, onliners spend the vast majority of their work time (and, according to them, increasingly their home time) sitting in front of computer monitors (sometimes as many as three) scrolling, clicking and hyperlinking through the news input and output of their own organization, of their competitors and of press agencies like the Associated Press, Thomson-Reuters and dpa. Screenwork is the clear phenomenological center of professional practice and other kinds of professional activities (collegial discussion, conversation by telephone) are treated as transient distractions from concentrated engagement with the information flows materialized on their monitors. Writing assignments are frequently interrupted (in times of "breaking news," every few minutes) so that journalists can synchronize themselves with real-time news feeds which may bring several thousand text and image bundles a day to their desktop and laptop computers.

No one has yet commented on how the autological and informatic sensibilities of cyberpolitical discourse might be anchored in the individuating character of deeply attentive screenwork. But I find the connection more than accidental; despite the frequent interruptions of newswork, journalists spend a striking amount of time concentrating on the individualizing interface of their screens, including the use of email and instant messaging software to coordinate their productive practice with colleagues sitting only a few meters away. A strong impression of autonomous selfhood engaged in a network of informatic relations thus makes perfect sense as an ideology shaped by practice. And, the intensification of multimediation (especially in terms of image and video content) in all domains of newswork has only increased the demands placed upon visual attention to remain synchronized with real-time newsflow.

But the ability to handle multimediation can also be made a matter of (sub)professional distinction and advantage. Online journalists claim, for example, a special appreciation of the flexible relationship of "medium" to "content" in digital media. When I asked an American newspaper journalist who was, by her own account, a "convert" to online journalism whether she felt there was anything that distinguished online journalism as a practice, she replied, "The core of what we do is delivering the content best-suited to the medium. … If we were to say we were experts in anything, it would be in adapting the content to the medium." "Information" and "content" serve as core discursive tropes denoting the objects and products of journalistic labor (tropes that, to a certain extent, have replaced older core tropes like "news" and "stories"). "Mediums" meanwhile are appreciated for their multiplicity and dynamism but most often treated as passive conduits for informational content. An epistemic capacity to separate "content" from "medium" as well as a practical capacity to optimize "content" across "medium" is conceived as a great professional advantage by online journalists and one often hears broadcast journalists criticized or ironized for their inability to understand, to paraphrase Nicholas Negroponte's critique (1995) of Marshall McLuhan, that content rather than medium is the message of the digital age. The nononliner is regarded as someone whose expertise is imprisoned within a single configuration of medium and content whereas the very essence of online expertise seems to be the ability to emancipate content from such medium dependency and instead to reimagine and repurpose content across a variety of different "platforms." Such judgments are never value-neutral, as one might imagine. Online cyberpolitical discourse is always rife with organic intellectual energy and its circuits of argument seem to inevitably return to the unwinding of the sovereign power of pre-Internet broadcasting and to the waning power of its caste elite. "There was some wonderful work done in the old days," one mid-career American former broadcast journalist reflected, "but one thing I don't miss at all is the arrogance of the opinion that journalists were guardians of the truth and that people should be happy to absorb the wisdom that was being beamed at them. That people are finally getting to have their say in what should count as news is to me one of the unquestionable improvements of the digital era."

## Conclusion: Biopolitics and / as Cyberpolitics

From the preceding testimony, we can recognize that cyberpolitical discourse rather eerily echoes certain aspects of Foucault's analysis of biopolitics and modern power.

But why would this be the case? Specific allusions to Foucault and his "theory" of power, for example, are not to be found in the cyberpolitical manifestos of digital publicity. And yet the image of the destabilization of centralized broadcast power and the rise of a network of producer-receivers seems strikingly familiar. But, I would argue that this is because Foucault's concept of biopolitics is already articulated in a cyberpolitical register. That is to say, Foucault's biopolitics already takes for granted that modern *pouvoir–savoir* is distributed through the circuits of an integrated field of forces and signs. Recent cyberpolitical discourse posits much the same field template but describes it (only somewhat more narrowly) as a matter of a revolution in communication technology generative of new forms of publicity, relationality and knowledge. One of the most interesting aspects of engaging digital publicity as an anthropological problem is that its streamlined cyberpolitical narratives bring into clearer focus a cyberpolitical imaginary that has long been at work in Western social theory.

To return to Williams's historical portrait of the rise of broadcasting (1974: 26–38), the application of electricity to communication had a slow and by no mean teleological development in Western industrial societies between the early 18th century and the mid 19th century, when key research on electromagnetism and thermodynamics opened paths toward the commercialization of electricity by the end of the century, including the first radio broadcasts. Up until this point, social theory, itself a nascent biopolitical *savoir* of the 19th century, seemed relatively unimpressed by energy research, let alone by the potentiality of mass communication, which was more often than not viewed as a spectral menace afflicting society rather than any kind of positive metaphor for social essence. But the widening industrialization of electric energy in the last decades of the 19th century seems to have granted energy a new kind of epistemic presence in biopolitical modeling of social life. Texts like Sigmund Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) and Émile Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (2005[1912]), for example, explored both psychic and social systems as closed energy circuits that sought to maintain homeostatic balance in the face of various forms of stimulus and excitation.

This "charging" of social theoretical attention to matters of energy and electricity evolved further with the industrialization of electronic computation in the 1930s and 1940s, which directly inspired the formation of early information theory and cybernetic theory (Galison 1994; Heims 1993) and indirectly inspired the spread and legitimacy of informationalist and cyberneticist thinking within the social and human sciences (e.g., Bateson 1987; McLuhan 1994; Wiener 1950). This thinking is particularly evident in certain fields of social-theoretical discourse, notably post-humanism (Hayles 1999; Kittler 1990), systems theory (Luhmann 2000), structuralism (Lévi-Strauss 1966) and post-structuralism (Foucault 1979). Even if Mark Poster is correct that Foucault showed little apparent interest in media, Foucault's analytical approach to modern power is rich with cybernetic and informatic insights. His understanding of the apparatus as a system of relations that serve as both means and ends, subject and objects of power-knowledge cannot be divorced from either the popularization of cybernetic and informatic discourse in mid 20th-century Western intellectual culture or from the increasing banality and intuitiveness of electronic communication technologies during the same period.

Thus our curious discovery is that after chasing biopolitics from early modern Europe into the contemporary domain of cyberpolitics we have found that biopower was cyberpolitical all along. In the human sciences, Foucault's biopolitics has been an exceptionally effective symptom of what I would describe as an unspoken (and perhaps unspeakable until our more recent saturation in talk of digital revolution) but nevertheless epistemically consequential "cybernetic unconscious" within postwar social theory. Reading Foucault's analytics of biopower prepares us well for encountering contemporary digital publicity. Which is perhaps to say that Foucault had internalized a cyberpolitical awareness long before many of us did. And, this may also help to explain the widespread intuitiveness and application of Foucault's analytic method in anthropology and the human sciences since the rise of digital publicity.

## REFERENCES

Agamben, Giorgio, 1998 Homo sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Anderson, Benedict, 1991 Imagined Communities, 2nd edition. London: Verso.

Baisnée, Olivier and Dominique Marchetti, 2006 The Economy of Just-In-Time Television Newscasting: Journalistic Production and Professional Excellence at Euronews. Ethnography 7(1): 99–123.

Bateson, Gregory 1987. Steps to an Ecology of Mind. Lanham, MD: Jason Aronson.

Beck, Stefan, 2007 Medicalizing Culture(s) or Culturalizing Medicine(s)? *In* Medicine as Culture: Instrumental Practices, Technoscientific Knowledge, and New Modes of Life R. V. Burri and J. Dumit, eds. London: Routledge.

Benjamin, Walter, 1968 The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction. *In* Illuminations. Harry Zohn trans. pp. 117–252. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

Biehl, João, 2007 Will to Live: AIDS Therapies and the Politics of Survival. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Boyer, Dominic, 2005 The Corporeality of Expertise. Ethnos 70(2): 243–266.

Boyer, Dominic, 2007 Understanding Media: A Popular Philosophy. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm.

Briggs, Charles L., 2005 Communicability, Racial Discourse and Disease. Annual Review of Anthropology 34: 269–291.

Briggs, Charles L. and Mark Nichter, 2009 Biocommunicability and the Biopolitics of Pandemic Threats. Medical Anthropology 28(3): 189–198.

Cohen, Lawrence, 2005 Operability, Bioavailability, and Exception. *In* Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics and Ethics as Anthropological Problems. A. Ong and S. J. Collier, eds. Oxford: Blackwell.

Coleman, Gabriella and Alex Golub, 2008 Hacker Practice: Moral Genres and the Cultural Articulation of Liberalism. Anthropological Theory 8(3): 255–277.

Deleuze, Gilles, 1995 Negotations. New York: Columbia University Press.

Deuze, Mark, 2008 Toward a Sociology of Online News. *In* Making Online News: The Ethnography of New Media Production. C. Paterson and D. Domingo, eds. New York: Peter Lang.

Durkheim, Émile, 2005 The Elementary Forms of Religious Life. New York: Free Press.

Ferguson, James and Akhil Gupta, 2002 Spatializing States: Toward an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality. American Ethnologist 29(4): 981–1001.

Foucault, Michel, 1979 Discipline and Punish. New York: Pantheon.

Foucault, Michel, 1980 The Confession of the Flesh. *In* Power / Knowledge. C. Gordon ed. New York: Pantheon.

Foucault, Michel, 1990 The History of Sexuality, vol. I. Introduction. New York: Vintage.
Foucault, Michel, 2000a The Subject and Power. *In* Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984, vol. III. Power. J. D. Faubion ed. New York: The Free Press.
Foucault, Michel, 2000b Governmentality. *In* Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984, vol. III. Power. J. D. Faubion ed. New York: The Free Press.
Franklin, Sarah and Celia Roberts, 2006 Born and Made: An Ethnography of Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Freud, Sigmund, 1900 Die Traumdeutung. Leipzig: F. Deuticke.
Fullwiley, Duana, 2006 Biosocial Suffering: Order and Illness in Urban West Africa. BioSocieties 1(4): 421–438.
Galison, Peter, 1994 The Ontology of the Enemy: Norbert Wiener and the Cybernetic Vision. Critical Inquiry 21: 228–266.
Greenhalgh, Susan and Edwin A. Winckler, 2005 Governing China's Population: from Leninist to Neoliberal Biopolitics. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Habermas, Jürgen, 1984 The Theory of Communicative Action, vol. I. Reason and the Rationalization of Society. Boston: Beacon Press.
Habermas, Jürgen, 1987 The Theory of Communicative Action, vol. II. Lifeworld and System, a Critique of Functionalist Reason. Boston: Beacon Press.
Habermas, Jürgen, 1989 The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
Hardt, Michael and Antonio Negri, 2000 Empire. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
Hayles, N. Katherine, 1999 How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Heims, Steve J., 1993 Constructing a Social Science for Postwar America: The Cybernetics Group, 1946–1953. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Hill, Kevin A. and John E. Hughes, 1998 Cyberpolitics: Citizen Activism in the Age of the Internet. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.
Horkheimer, Max and Theodor Adorno, 1972 Dialectic of Enlightenment. New York: Continuum.
Inda, Jonathan Xavier, ed., 2005 Anthropologies of Modernity: Foucault, Governmentality, and Life Politics. Oxford: Blackwell.
Jordan, Tim, 1999 Cyberpower: The Culture and Politics of Cyberspace and the Internet. London: Routledge.
Kelty, Christopher, 2005 Geeks, Social Imaginaries and Recursive Publics. Cultural Anthropology 20(2): 185–214.
Kittler, Friedrich A., 1990 Discourse Networks 1800/1900. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Klinenberg, Eric, 2005 Convergence: News Production in a Digital Age. Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 597: 48–64.
Lakoff, Andrew and Stephen J. Collier, eds., 2008 Biosecurity Interventions: Global Health and Security in Question. New York: Columbia University Press.
Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 1966 The Savage Mind. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Luhmann, Niklas, 2000 The Reality of Mass Media. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
McLuhan, Marshall, 1994 Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Negroponte, Nicholas, 1995 Being Digital. New York: Vintage.
Petryna, Adriana, 2002 Life Exposed: Biological Citizens after Chernobyl. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Poster, Mark, 2008 Foucault, Deleuze and New Media. Paper presented at 'Foucault Across the Disciplines', University of California, Santa Cruz, March 1–2, 2008. http://humweb.ucsc.edu/foucaultacrossthedisciplines/foucault.htm, accessed November 5, 2010.
Povinelli, Elizabeth A., 2006 The Empire of Love: Toward a Theory of Intimacy, Genealogy and Carnality. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Rabinow, Paul and Nikolas Rose, 2006 Biopower Today. Biosocieties 1(2): 195–217.
Redfield, Peter, 2005 Doctors, Borders and Life in Crisis. Cultural Anthropology 20(3): 328–361.
Rosen, Jay, 2006 The People Formerly Known as the Audience. Blog post http://journalism.nyu.edu/pubzone/weblogs/pressthink/2006/06/27/ppl_frmr.html, accessed November 5, 2010.
Sunder Rajan, Kaushik, 2007 Experimental Values. New Left Review 45: 67–88.
Warner, Michael, 2002 Public and Counterpublics. Public Culture 14(1): 49–90.
Wiener, Norbert, 1950 The Human Use of Human Beings: Cybernetics and Society. New York: Avon Books.
Williams, Raymond, 1974 Television: Technology and Cultural Form. London: Fontana.

CHAPTER 6

# BODILINESS

## *The Body Beyond the Body: Social, Material and Spiritual Dimensions of Bodiliness*

*Terence Turner*

### INTRODUCTION

The Kayapo people of Central Brazil have no word or customary locution in their language for "the body" as a singular entity, but they possess a complex set of ideas about the objective and subjective attributes of bodily activities, such as sensing, knowing, growing, aging and dying, about parts of the body and their functions, about bodily form as a process of self-making that takes on a spiritual identity, about the social body as a system of differences among bodies, and about the structural identity of the material and social body with other social and natural phenomena up to and including the cosmos as a whole. This structure consists of forms of activity (schemas): processes of development and dissolution, objectification and deobjectification, formation and transformation. Formally homologous processes constitute each level of the cosmos, from the family to the field of kinship relations to the village community, and from the relation of the social community to its natural setting to the highest level, the cosmos as a whole as the universal form of space-time (Turner n.d.). The human body is the most elementary unit of this cosmic hierarchy, which forms a nesting series of identical structuring processes: a universal system of bodies, as it were, beyond the body.

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

## Body Schema as Material Content and Spirit Form: Life Process as Dialectic of Form and Content

Kayapo ideas about bodiliness are founded on the principle that the forms of bodies comprise the templates for the internal development and external relations of the material bodies in which they arise. The forms develop as the channels of the material energies of the bodies, orient their development and activities, and are in turn shaped by the external relations of the embodied form to other bodies. The forms of things, in other words, are actually embodied processes of formation, which also serve to orient future development and activities. They consist of the directed agency or force that impels the material content of things, including the energetic force that it produces, to assume the specific patterns proper to the species of body or kind of entity in question. This proposition holds for the cosmos as a whole and all its parts or constituent units, all of which share the same general structural properties as active processes of development, transformation and interaction, which not only produce their own forms but also affect the forms and transformations of other bodies and entities. It follows that no embodied form can be understood solely as the product of its own activity, but always owes its formation in part to its relations with other bodies.

As the guiding patterns of activity that cause the objective physical contents of bodies to take on specific forms, the forms of things give definition and direction to their material contents. This formative principle manifests itself as subjective agency, which may be imagined as a spiritual force. The objective forms of animate beings are thus conceived to be the products or manifestations of subjective, intentionally directed activity. This set of ideas is exemplified by the cluster of meanings of the Kayapo term *karon*, which is used equally to mean "image," "form," "shadow" and the "spirit," soul, or ghost of a person or other entity. Although humans are thought of as the spirit karon-possessing beings *par excellence*, mammals, birds, fish, and many trees, vines and other plants, the ghosts of the dead, and even some entities like the sun and moon which might be defined as inanimate, are also thought to possess spirit-forms and associated subjective powers.

Here we rejoin the basic notion behind the "animism" common to most if not all indigenous peoples of the Amazon (Bird-David 1999; Descola 1996, 2005; Turner 2009, n.d.). Animism is grounded in the idea that spirit is essentially the guiding principle, animating force, and intentional goal of the developmental processes of formation of the bodies in which it is produced, and the corollary notion that this spiritual property of form is universally shared by all animate (and in some cases inanimate) beings. The life of an animate being or the energetic properties of inanimate natural entities like the cosmos or celestial bodies, in this view, is the product or effect of the active synthesis of the form (or spirit) and content (or bodily substance) that together constitute the formed body of the being in question. The spirit of the entity is its form considered as an image or pattern that needs its material content of substance and energy to exist and develop. This need is the force that holds the form and physical content of the entity together.

This synthetic unity is the life process of the body. It is not merely a fixed categorical property, given by definition, but a quantitatively variable, unstable, dynamic relation, susceptible to disruption and eventual dissolution as the embodied subject loses its material energy and power. Such dissolution can be either partial and

temporary, as in illness or shock induced by extreme fright, or permanent, as in the death of the person or organism. The spiritual force or form of the entity may thus under extreme conditions become separated from the bodily or material content of its form. Death brings the permanent separation of spirit-form from body-content, and thus dissolves the synthesis of form and content that is the basis of the objective existence of the organism.

Neither spirit nor physical body, however, can exist independently for long without the other. The fission of the synthetic unity of spirit and body therefore results in the further decomposition and ultimate disappearance of its separated parts. The karon or spirit-form continues to exist for a time after the death of the body as a ghost, but gradually loses its human character, becoming an animal-like being in the forest and eventually dissolving completely. The material content of the body (*in*, flesh; *'i*, bones; and *kamrô*, blood) undergoes a parallel transformational process of dissolution, from their synthetic unity in the living body to a mass of dead (*tuk*, "black," "dead," or "in transformation") rotting flesh, blackened blood, and disarticulated white bones.

## Gross and Subtle Anatomy: Flesh, Blood, Skin, Hair, Senses and Extremities

The interaction of bodily form and content takes the material form of the relation between the external form of the body (understood both as the surface of the body, comprising the skin and hair and the extremities: head, hands and forearms, lower legs and feet) as contrasted to its inner or central parts: the trunk, thighs and upper arms, associated with inner bodily substance and energetic processes.

It has been argued that for many Amazonian peoples, the physiological body is considered a mere "envelope" of the spirit or subjective consciousness, which bears no consequential relation to it. As will be evident from what has already been said, I consider this view to be fundamentally mistaken, certainly for the Kayapo, but also I believe more generally for most if not all other Amazonian peoples.

In speaking of human bodily form and its relation to subjective identity, spirit or perspective, it is essential to distinguish between the natural form of the physical body and the meta-form of the social body constructed by adornments and modifications such as coiffure, painting and clothing. As a general ethnographic point, the universal practice of Amazonian cultures in altering the external form of the body through changes in adornment, painting, coiffure, dress and scarification, to mark and help to bring about transformations in the social identity and subjective perspective of persons, is inconsistent with suggestions that they regard bodily form as modified by such means merely as an external "envelope" unrelated to the inner material and subjective content of bodiliness and / or personhood.

The critical point is that the deliberate adornment of the surface of the body is for Amazonians a means of defining and regulating the identity and social relations of the person in ways that draw upon that person's internal bodily processes (growth, puberty, reproduction, sickness, death, etc.) and channel them into forms consistent with the external relations of the embodied person with other social bodies or embodied identities. The importance of this practice arises from the association of bodily form with subjectivity or spirit as the essence of personal identity, and the idea that

bodily form is the product of an interaction between the inner powers and senses of the body, the modes of knowledge and capacities for growth and activity they make possible, and the external world of social relations and activities mediated by the external activities of the body. The surface of the body, conceived both as the skin and hair and as the extremities (the head, with its sense organs; the forearms and hands, and the lower legs and feet), is the locus of bodily form. As such it plays a double role, as the boundary and container of the internal body, and also as the mediating vector and filter between the individual body and its identity and the external object world, including other bodies and their associated identities. The Kayapo consider that an analogous role is discharged by the natural patterns of the surfaces – fur, feathers or scales – of nonsocial creatures (Turner 1995).

There is a pertinent set of Kayapo ideas concerning the role of skin for human babies and very young (pre-socialized) children. The Kayapo say that the skin of newborn infants is "soft" *rerek*, meaning that it is a permeable membrane that does not yet constitute a definite boundary either of physical bodiliness or social identity. At this early stage the infant is still completely dependent on its parents, incapable of locomotion, feeding itself, or speech, and thus relatively undifferentiated as an individual from them. Mothers of infants typically cover their bodies with very elaborate painted designs, which carry the symbolic connotation of conferring on them a socialized identity, or in so many words a "social skin." When the young child becomes able to walk, take solid food, and in general relate to others as a distinct social individual, its skin is said to become "strong" *tàytch* (Turner 1995).

In infancy, as in later childhood and adulthood, there is thus a variable but important relation between the skin as bodily surface and the internal content of parts and powers of the body: flesh, bones, muscles, organs such as the heart (considered the site of cognitive and emotional powers), alimentary tract, reproductive organs, the active processes in which they engage and the needs associated with them that must be satisfied through interactions with the external world. The development by the child of the ability to control and satisfy the needs of his or her inner body, and to deploy the different powers and capacities it generates, directly affects the condition of the skin, making it "strong" and relatively impermeable. By the same token, violation of certain social prohibitions, such as incest or eating meat during periods of ritual seclusion or sickness, may result in outbreaks of skin disease such as rashes or scabies.

Another pertinent Kayapo belief about skin is that failure to bathe or wash regularly (at least daily) is not only anti-social and animal-like but potentially unhealthy, because it may lead to the penetration of foreign disease agents through the skin into the body. All this is clearly inconsistent with assertions that Amazonian people regard the external surface of bodies, whether animal, fish, avian or human, as a mere "envelope" unrelated to the inner material and spiritual content of bodiliness, species identity, and / or personhood (Turner 1995).

Blood is another element of gross anatomy that plays a vital role as mediator between bodily substance and form. Blood is conceived as the active medium connecting the substance or physical content of the body with its spirit or form. In this sense it is the material essence of life, the vehicle of spirit at the same time as the vital element of bodily substance. This makes contact with the blood of an animal killed by a hunter or human enemy dangerous. If not immediately washed off or denatured by

thorough cooking an animal's blood can enter the body and cause disease or even death. The same is true for the blood of a slain enemy, which in addition to being washed off must be let out of the killer's body by a series of incisions made during a period of ritual seclusion analogous in some ways to the couvade restrictions of fathers at the birth of their children. For similar reasons a weapon used in killing an enemy must be discarded and the effects of the contact with the bloody corpse of the enemy counteracted by the warrior's striking a hardwood tree or boulder with either his weapon or bare fist.

## The Social Production of Bodily Form: "Social Skin" and "Social Body"

The natural surface forms of the physical human body, to be sure, may be considered to comprise a socially unspecific "envelope" that does not define the gendered and generational identities of embodied subjects in social terms. It is therefore necessary to distinguish the natural (physical) from the social body, and to consider the ways in which the latter may differ from the former. The social body, with its meta-surface composed of cultural forms of bodily decoration, which I have called the "social skin" (Turner 1980 [1993] [2007]: 85–94) imposes definite perspectival forms on the subjective identity of the embodied person that shape his or her relations to the external social world and other social bodies (Turner 2009). A critical point about the social identity constructed by this "social skin" is that the modifications of the surface of the body by painting, adornment and coiffure considered together comprise a total system of distinctions of gender, social age, and distinctive social powers, roles and conditions: e.g., infantile dependence on the parents, the autonomous individuality of older childhood, masculine and feminine gender, male and female social forms of active sexuality, accomplished reproductivity (parenthood) as social adulthood, ability to "hear" (understand and follow) social communication; ability (of men only) to speak in public and "teach" others proper social and ritual conduct and lore; mourning for a deceased spouse or child; preparing for war or conflict; having killed an enemy (for men only); and performing various ritual roles. This total system constitutes a collective entity, the "social body," distinct from the individual physical body. It embodies the whole series of distinctions of social age and both sets of gender roles, as well as the other differential bodily capacities and conditions listed above; it nevertheless embodies the same structural dimensions as the individual physical body, on the one hand, and the village community and cosmos, on the other. It is this "social body" that constitutes the guiding form of the synthesis of internal bodily content and external social and object relations that constitutes the social life cycle as a whole (Turner 1995).

### The Social Skin: Bodily Adornment as Code and Schema of the Social Body

In the context of ordinary secular social life, the Kayapo distinguish male and female bodies and the bodies of persons of different social ages, as defined by the system of age classes and sets, by the use of distinctive cosmetic treatments. The bodies of those

engaged in ritual performance are marked by distinctive bodily adornments, most of which are used by performers of both sexes, with those playing specialized ritual roles, such as initiands or those receiving honorific names being distinguished by distinctive bodily treatments. A third major contextual distinction marked by distinctive treatments of the body is that between living and dead bodies. As I shall explain in more detail below, the grave tumulus assumes the role of a second body, and undergoes a process of disintegration that symbolically enacts not only the decomposition of the dead body but the social death of death itself (Turner 2009).

In sum, all of these aspects and developmental transitions are marked and given social meaning by a series of rites of passage, which confer communally recognized items and styles of bodily adornment. The development of these natural capacities is symbolically marked, channeled and publicly communicated by standardized forms of decoration and adornment of the surface of the body. These serve as badges of identity, attesting to the wearer's attainment of a specific category of social age, which from the onset of adolescence is accompanied by recruitment to a series of communal age sets and associations.

The Kayapo think of their own bodies as hybrid combinations of natural animal qualities channeled into the relational forms of social identity. The former are exemplified by internal physical processes located primarily in the central trunk of the body, such as growth, digestion, sexuality and reproduction. These natural energies and powers, including the natural processes of growth, aging, and puberty, become transformed and directed into socially patterned activities of various kinds that are associated with transformations of bodily form, marked and reinforced by cosmetic modifications of the surface of the body such as painting, hair-styling, and the wearing of ornaments. These stylized modifications of the body surface serve as a filter that directs and accentuates interactions between internal bodily processes and external entities with whom the embodied person interacts.

The Kayapo idea of the social development of the person emphasizes the progressive transformation of the internal strength and energy located in the central trunk of the body into relations with the external social and natural world, through mobility and manual dexterity focused in the feet and hands, and the senses of sight, hearing, smelling and tasting, located in the head. These transformational processes are represented and channeled by the basic color scheme of body painting, which consists of black for the trunk (chest, abdomen, upper arms and thighs), red for the feet and lower legs, hands and lower arms, and red also for the eyes, nose and sometimes the mouth. Black, the word for which, *tuk*, also means "death," and which is also applied to the transitional zone between the village and "natural" zone of the forest, is the appropriate color for the internal or central part of the body, the source of its strength and life-energies, which must be transformed in order to be channeled into socialized forms of activity and identity through which the embodied person engages with external social space by way of the extremities of the body. Red (*kamrek*) is the appropriate color for the parts of the body which directly interact with external social space, because it connotes vitality, life and overt expression.

Hair is another feature of the bodily surface that is employed to index transformations in social bodiliness. Long hair betokens continuity with other bodies. Nursing infants wear their hair long: their bodily and social identities are still only incompletely separated from that of their mothers. Older boys and girls who are weaned, can walk

and use language, and relate to other persons on their own as autonomous individuals, have their hair cut short. Both sexes cease to cut their hair when they begin to engage in procreative sexuality (sexual relations that may be expected to result in pregnancy and the formation of a family, thus reestablishing an intimate physical and social continuity with another person. Boys begin to wear their hair long when they receive their penis sheaths, girls when they consummate their marriages by becoming pregnant. Parents cut their hair at the death of a child or spouse, in recognition of the severance of the continuity created by reproductive sexuality (Turner 1980, 1995).

There is no space here for a full description of the Kayapo system of bodily adornment, which I have described in detail elsewhere. Enough has been said, however, to make the essential points about Kayapo notions of bodiliness. In sum, among the Kayapo and many other Amazonian peoples,

> … the surface of the body becomes … a boundary of a peculiarly complex kind, which simultaneously separates domains lying on either side of it and conflates different levels of social, individual and intra-psychic meaning. The skin and hair are the concrete boundary between the self and the other, individual and society … [where] the "self" is a composite product of social and "natural" (libidinous) components. At one level, the *social skin* models the social boundary between the individual actor and other actors. At a deeper level, it models the internal, psychic diaphragm between the pre-social, libidinous energies of the individual and the "internalized others," of social meanings and values that [comprise socialized subjectivity]. At yet a third, macro-social level, the conventional modifications of skin and hair that comprise the *social skin* define, not individuals, but categories or classes of individuals … The system of bodily adornment as a whole (all the transformations of the *social skin* considered as a set) defines each class in terms of its relations with all the others [and] thus becomes, at this third level of interpretation, the boundary between social classes (Turner 1980, [1993], [2007]: 31–32).

## Body as Microcosm: Bodiliness and Cosmos as Formative Processes of Space-Time

The Kayapo forms of bodily adornment, in association with the aspects of bodiliness and social identity they represent, divide the body into zones analogous to those of cosmic and village space-time, defined along two dimensions structurally identical with those of the cosmos (Turner 2009, n.d.). A vertical axis of irreversible linear development corresponds in spatial terms to the vertical posture of the body, and in temporal terms to the growth of the body from "root" or foot to "tip" or head. The body is also divided concentrically between a central inner space and a peripheral zone of external interpenetration with social space (Turner 1995). To clarify the meaning of this formal pattern it is essential to comprehend the outlines of the Kayapo ideas of the nature and structure of the cosmos.

The Kayapo explain the structural form of the cosmos by the following story. Both the earth and the sky originally existed as flat, circular discs, held apart by gigantic trees which grew along the outer edge of the terrestrial disc. A tapir gnawed through the trunks of these trees, causing them to fall to the earth. As the trees fell, the edges of the celestial disc that they had supported fell with them, coming to rest directly upon the earth. The sky thus assumed the form of a dome, with its circumference

resting on the outer edge of the earth's disc and its highest point at its center of the disc, directly above the center of the earth.

The structure of the cosmos formed by the two conjoined discs comprises two complementary dimensions. One is the concentric opposition of the outer periphery of the two fused discs and the central point of the disc of the earth, directly beneath the apex of dome of the sky. The other is the vertical contrast between the apex of the celestial dome and the points on the edge of the terrestrial disc where the sun rises and sets. This new, bi-dimensional spatial form equally embodies a new form of time: an integral mode of space-time materially manifested by the movement of the sun in vertical space-time from rising to zenith to setting, and in horizontal space-time from the eastern edge of the terrestrial disc over its center to the western edge. The joining of the edges of the discs of the earth and sky defines the limit of horizontal space-time as identical with the limit or zero point of vertical space-time, and simultaneously creates a commutative relation between them. It is this relationship that enables the sun to pass from the one to the other to make, and endlessly repeat, its daily journey across the sky, rising and setting at opposite points on the edge of the cosmic disc (Turner n.d.).

The Kayapo, in their metaphorical terms for this linear diurnal movement, liken it to the growth of a plant. They call the place in the east where the sun rises the "root" or "beginning" of the sky, so the eastern half of the sky is the "lower sky" (*kàykwa kratch*, from *kàykwa*, "sky," and *kratch*, "root," "lower part" or "beginning"); the point in the west where the sun sets is correspondingly called the "tip" or "end" of the sky, and the western sky thus becomes the "upper sky" (*kàykwa 'ênhôt*, from *'ênhot*, "upper," "top," or "end"). East and West are the only Kayapo cardinal points: North and South are not lexically differentiated, but are called merely "the edge of the sky," *kàykwa nhirê*, in reference to the sides or edges of the sun's path (*mut djupru*, from *mut*, "sun," and *pru*, "path") from east to west, represented as vertical growth from root to tip.

This vertical dimension of space-time is essentially a form of activity, a schema, and as such is both temporal and spatial. It is pragmatically created by the journey of the sun across the middle of the celestial dome from east to west. As a form of activity, the diurnal solar journey is linear, with a beginning and end, oriented in a fixed direction from east to west, and although it reaches the end of its voyage with its setting every day, is infinitely repetitive. The diurnal journey is divided into two equal halves on either side of its mid-point, the zenith of its journey at high noon when it reaches the apex of the celestial dome; these two segments reverse each other as modes of vertical movement (i.e., rising or coming up as opposed to setting or going down) even as they maintain a constant linear orientation on the vertical dimension from the "root" of the "lower sky" to the "tip" of the "upper sky." The morning phase of the sun's ascent from rising to zenith is reflected in reversed mirror image by the afternoon phase of its decline from zenith to setting.

The irreversible schema of "vertical" solar movement from east to west, in other words, is internally constructed as a reversible pair of symmetrical but opposed schemas of vertical movement. These schemas also comprise a pair of reversed movements on the horizontal (concentric) dimension of space-time: from the point on the eastern periphery of the cosmic disc where the sun rises to the central point represented by the apex of the dome of the sky, and then from this central point to the point on the

western edge of the periphery where the sun sets. Cosmic space-time thus satisfies the criteria of a structure, as a system of reversible transformations of an interdependent set of dimensions that remain within the same invariant boundary and thus reproduce the same structure (Turner n.d.).

## The Village and Its Surrounding Region as Cosmogram

This spatiotemporal pattern is most fully exemplified by the layout of the social community considered in relation to its surrounding natural environment. The Kayapo, like other Central Brazilian peoples, are well known for their large, geometrically laid out villages. The Kayapo village is laid out as a circle of structurally identical matri-uxorilocal extended family houses, surrounding a large, open central plaza, in the center of which stands the men's house (called *ngà*, "center"). This layout is reminiscent of the mythical image of the early cosmos constituted by a circular disc, the outer edge of which is occupied by a ring of giant trees (those that hold up the disc of the sky). The central plaza, with the men's house at its center, is the locus of communal social, political and ceremonial activities. It is also the midpoint or center of men's social life cycles. Men must move out of their natal houses as boys to take up residence as bachelors in the ngà. After thus formally separating from their own fathers and mothers, they continue to reside in the men's house until they consummate marriage by impregnating the woman whom they have been courting, and thus becoming fathers in their own right. After this they take up residence in their wives' houses, but continue to use the men's house as a club and focus of collective activities by their age sets and political societies.

Immediately beyond the circle of houses is a zone perhaps 200 meters deep called *a-tuk*, the "black" or "dead ground." This is a transitional zone between the social space of the village and the asocial domain of the savannah and forest beyond. In this zone are located the cemetery and various ritual seclusion sites used by those undergoing rites of passage, as well as middens of trash from the houses. It is also an area frequented by lovers pursuing extra-marital affairs, often referred to as "behind the house" *kikre bu'ã* liaisons. This zone is cross-cut by paths leading to water sources, swidden gardens and sites of hunting, fishing and foraging activities in the forest and savanna. It is also the site of the airstrip, the football field, the school, infirmary and radio hut – all points of transition to the external space-time of the encompassing national society. There are thus continual comings and goings that pass in both directions through this zone, many of them having the character of reversible transformations between the central village and the peripheral zone of nature. This outer zone extends, as far as the conceptual scheme is concerned, to the outer limits of space-time, where the sky meets the earth and the vertical dimension of cosmic structure identified with the linear flow of time disappears. Horizontal space is thus organized as a concentric series of zones. All of these zones constitute points or stages of activities and processes of entering and leaving social space, or socialization and desocialization. The concentric form of the terrestrial disc is thus not a purely spatial but, like its vertical dimension, a spatio-temporal schema: thus, a concentric dimension of social space-time.

The circular form of village space replicates in microcosm the macrocosmic form of cosmic space-time, conceived as a circular flat disc with its outer ring of trees, like the houses of the village circle a series of identical units defined by a conjunction of

concentric and vertical dimensions of space-time. The tapir's creation of the dome of the sky by causing its edges to fall to the earth did not of itself bring into being the articulation of the latter into the concentric zones that now constitute its spatio-temporal structure. This concentric articulation of the horizontal dimension of cosmic space-time only comes into existence with the establishment of human society, in the form of a differentiated human domain, the village, which serves as its central point of reference. The centrality of the village, with its plaza and men's house, becomes in turn the essential coordinate of the vertical dimension, being located directly beneath the zenith of the sun's path, the exact center of the celestial dome (Turner n.d.).

The bi-dimensional pattern of the cosmic spatio-temporal process, in sum, is replicated by the pattern of village structure. The pattern formed by the relation of the village to its surrounding natural environment replicates the pattern of its own replication of that structure, as mediated by the transformational filter of the a-tuk zone, a sort of collective social skin or surface that the village presents to the world beyond. We have seen that he construction of social persons and bodies follows the same bi-dimensional schema as the diurnal renewal of cosmic space-time and the articulation of the segments of social organization in the layout of villages, because it is an essentially analogous developmental process of transformative activity.

## Ritual Bodies: Feathers, Animal Identities, and Masks

There is, however another mode of social personhood, which calls for a radically different treatment of bodily adornment, movement and speech: the costume, dancing and singing of communal ritual participants, and the most highly elaborate form of this activity, the manufacture of ritual masks as the quintessential expression of the ritualization of embodiment.

For communal ceremonies, most of which are rites of passage of one sort or another, people adorn their bodies in ways different both in form and meaning from their normal secular forms of bodily presentation. They make prominent use of feathers for headdresses, feather capes, bunches of feathers fastened to their elbows, necklaces, and small breast plumage stuck over the whole central area of the body (that area normally painted black in the secular, quotidian style). They also use noise-making belts and anklets of tapir or peccary hooves and necklaces of jaguar claws and teeth or peccary tusks: in short, they present themselves as hybrid animal-human beings, analogous to the ancestral human and animal forms of the mythical age before the differentiation of animals and fully social humans. There is no space here to describe these costumes, or the ceremonies themselves, in the detail they deserve. In general terms, however, it can be said that in the adornment of their bodies for participation in the ritual transformation and reproduction of social relations, the Kayapo symbolically return to the undifferentiated mythical state in which animals and humans were much alike, before either developed into their present forms as fully social humans or fully natural animals. They then collectively enact the appropriation and transformation of their ancestral animal or avian powers into contemporary social and cultural form, as a framework for the transformation of the relatively undeveloped social forms of the boy or girl initiands or baptisands into new and more socially developed forms and identities (Turner 1991).

These transformations typically entail choreographic formations and movements that combine concentric movements (e.g., repeatedly circling the central plaza, while special rites are performed by selected officiants at its central point, or performing successive repetitions of the ceremony at successive locations, beginning far out in the forest and moving in to sites progressively nearer to the village, such as the transitional a-tuk zone, and finishing up in the central plaza) and linear sequences of rites representing and inculcating irreversible transformations in the status and identity of the initiands. The ceremonies themselves, in short, are organized as choreographic cosmograms embodying the complementary concentric and linear motions in space-time that operate at all levels of cosmic structure, including the transition from the mythical time of relatively undifferentiated coexistence with animals to the contemporary age of differentiation between human culture and animal nature. These movements and the socializing or desocializing processes which they enact invariably involve transformations of the bodily surface of those undergoing and performing the ceremony: transformations that themselves embody the same cosmic patterns of spatio-temporal movement.

## Ritual Masks: Artificial Embodiments of Sacred Power

Undoubtedly the most extreme examples of the ritual construction of bodiliness among the Kayapo are the elaborate ceremonial masks and animal costumes made for several of the major naming and initiation ceremonies (Turner 1992; 1998). The masks in question are effigies of animals (anteaters, wooly monkeys, howler monkeys), imitation *Karajá Aruanã* (river spirit) masks, Kayapo "*Bô*" masks said to be derived from them, and the gigantic *Kôkô* masks that are the eponymous presences of the ceremony of that name and appear to have no referent other than the ceremony itself. All of these are costumes constructed of buriti palm fiber that cover the whole body of the dancer, with distinctive heads and faces made of buritĺ basketry painted and decorated with feathers. All these masks are collectively produced by groups of men in secluded camps in the transitional "black" a-tuk zone outside the village proper. Women are prohibited from entering or coming within sight of these camps, supposedly under threat of beating or (so I was told) rape by the men in the camp.

The masks once finished are treated as sacred objects endowed with dangerous mana-like power. Anteater masks or the Aruanã and Bô masks must not be touched by women, who might suffer death or some other physical disorder as a result. A male performer who stumbles or falls while wearing the mask risks the same fate. The anteater masks are sung to by the male ceremonial congregation that accompanies their performance in the plaza, led by a precentor with a maraca who inherits this privileged role from a maternal uncle or grandparent. The Bô and Aruanã masks are kept in the men's house, and are chanted to by precentors who accompany themselves with a maraca. The anteater masks are similarly serenaded after their performances in the plaza as they retire to the village house of the woman who has inherited this role, where they are kept overnight. Their exit is accompanied by a precentor with a maraca, leading a chorus of male spectators. The singing indexes their aspect as sentient, animated bodies able to embody the powers of their human makers and pass them on, reciprocally, to the children receiving social identities (names) in the ceremony.

The performances of the masked dancers play integral parts in the ritual dramas of socialization (conferring names and valued identities on children) in which they perform. They are able to play their roles as actors in this process by virtue of the spiritual power of embodiment and animation (Kayapo: *wayangá* magical force) imbued in them by the collective activity of their human producers, a power whose dangerous, sacred properties require their production to be kept separate from profane human society in secluded camps in the a-tuk transformational zone, and that necessitates that the finished masks be insulated from contact with profane social beings, above all women, thereafter.

This power is socially produced by the men's collective action, but it is not a normal social power, as the removal of its production from profane society and the nonhuman, asocial character of the animal- or nonhuman masked beings like the Aruanã, Kôkô or Bô masks that embody it suggests. The masks, rather, are imbued with a wild male power of embodiment, analogous to the natural but socially channeled female power of gestation and birth. Rather, the ceremonies in which the masked beings act their parts constitute ritual processes for socializing and controlling the wild power of embodiment imbued in the masks so that it can be transmuted into a highly valued dimension of the embodied social identities of the children who are the objects of the ritual. The masks in effect act as the mediators of this power from the collectively organized ritual action of the men, who capture it by producing the masks outside the space of profane society and then mimetically control it by performing the masked ceremony that confers the powerful names and valued identities conferred by the ceremony on the children. The power and value of the names derives from the sacred power of the masks whose dancing is necessary to confer them. The power in question, to repeat, is the power of the symbolic embodiment effected by the men's manufacture of the masks, transformed by the ritual performance into a demiurge of the production of social identity and value. Much the same can be said of the specialized animal costumes of the animal societies or dancers who appear in certain rituals, like the bird society in the boy's initiation ceremony or the jaguar dancers in the Tàkàk naming ceremony (Turner 1991).

A partial exception to this account of the embodied power of the masks is the masks of the ritual clowns in the Kôkô ceremony, in which the anteater masks also appear. The clown masks represent monkeys of different species, which play different social roles in the parallel, human-like society of the clowns. The chiefs of the clowns are masked as howler monkeys, and the masks of their followers represent woolly or spider monkeys. These masks are also made by men outside the village in secret camps from which women are excluded. They are imbued with certain sacred powers, but unlike the other types of masks, they are not set apart by taboos against touching by ordinary humans. Women and children can freely touch the monkey masks and even try to pull them off the human dancers within to discover their identities. As tricksters, the howler and monkey masks embody power, but in a comedic form that is not directly dangerous to social humans. Rather, it enables them to act as joking partners of humans, simultaneously miming and transgressing their social ways, while teaching them to the otherwise inert and socially incompetent anteaters (Turner 1992, 1998). The supreme expression of their ritual power is that instead, they have the ability to bring the anteater masks to life after they have been finished by the men. The howlers. in their roles as the chief tricksters, teach the anteaters to play their roles in the ceremony:

first to walk, then to dance, and at the climax of the ritual, to sing in a sort of wordless chant. Led by the howlers, the monkeys dance with the anteaters in mock human ceremonies, and also perform skits and play tricks satirizing profane human social behavior.

## Bodily Adornment in the Age of Inter-Ethnic Coexistence

The traditional cosmological vision continues to serve as the framework of Kayapo social consciousness in the contemporary era of inter-ethnic relations with Brazil and the world system. The successful Kayapo efforts to defend and reclaim their original territory have enabled them to retain control of reserves covering close to 150,000 square kilometers, with 23 villages and a population of slightly over 7,000 people. They have prevented occupation of their lands by members of the national population and avoided extensive deforestation by loggers. Kayapo villages thus remain socially autonomous units surrounded by natural areas of forest and / or savanna. They continue to orient themselves and their communities according to the two cardinal points of the root and tip of the sky, with the men's house at the center of the village plaza directly beneath the apex of the dome of the sky, conceived as the center of a series of concentric zones of decreasing levels of socialization. An adaptation of the traditional cosmological pattern arising from contact with the national culture is the location of technological and administrative functions involved in interaction with the Brazilians, such as airstrips, clinics, pharmaceutical dispensaries, football fields, radio and electric generator shacks, schools, and garages and parking areas for motor vehicles, in the "black" transitional zone outside the ring of houses defining the boundary of the village proper. This is indeed a zone of inter-ethnic transformational processes that now mediate between the Kayapo community and national Brazilian society. Their location in the a-tuk zone is thus appropriate in traditional cosmological terms. (Turner 1991, n.d.)

This macrocosmic adjustment of village-level space-time has been coupled with a parallel adjustment in the treatment of the traditional pattern of adornment of the surface of the individual human body as a mediator between the Kayapo social person and the external space of interaction with Brazilian society. Persons of both genders have supplemented their traditional repertoire of bodily decoration with token items of Brazilian clothing to cover the parts of their bodies that Brazilian standards of etiquette require to be concealed for normal social interaction to become possible. Men now tend to wear shorts and women one-piece dresses, but both sexes continue to wear body paint beneath their clothes and use traditional bodily ornaments, including headdresses, Kayapo-style necklaces and bracelets, and coiffure on the exposed parts of their bodies. The Brazilian clothing thus constitutes a transformational zone around the central region of their Kayapo-decorated bodies, channeling their cultural agency into alien Brazilian social forms where appropriate, while leaving their painted extremities and traditionally coiffed heads to protrude directly into external interaction space. At both the level of the village and that of the individual body, therefore, an inner Kayapo core persists, with a transformational zone containing intercultural transformational elements mediating between it and a concentrically surrounding outer zone of alien sociality (Turner 1991).

## Objectification, Deobjectification, and the Changing Relations of Body and Spirit

Kayapo bodies are integral elements of Kayapo cosmology, and the essential concern of cosmology is with material reality: not merely the forms and spirits of things in the abstract, but the process through which they become objective realities. Objectification is an intrinsically relational process. Things become objectified in relation to other things, and their forms embody the specific forms of these relations. Objectification in this relational sense is an essential aspect of the transformation of content into form. It is that aspect of the process that consists of its interaction with other entities, the way its formation is affected by and in turn affects those entities. Objectivity, in this form-mediated, relational sense, *is* reality for cosmological purposes. The objective form or external appearance of a thing is the mediating link between its content or inner essence and its objectified or "realized" relations to the other parts of the world to which it belongs. Just as the objective form of a being or thing constitutes a specific set of relations between it and the system of which it is a part, it also embodies or implies a specific subject position or perspective in relation to the rest of the system, together with the power to interact with it.

As this implies, the forms of activity (schemas) that constitute the ontological process of objectification also serve as the epistemological categories which define the perspective of the objectified person or nonhuman being toward the world. Objectification, as a combined ideal and material activity, thus necessarily also involves *subjectification*, or the construction of subjectivity. The identity of epistemological and ontological categories, and of objective and subjective perspectives, is the logical corollary of the egocentric and sociocentric structure of Kayapo cosmology, in which human society is the center and perspectival vantage point of the cosmos, and the body of the social person is constructed as a microcosmic replica of this central, sociocentric zone of space-time.

As the transformational process through which bodies take on objective reality, and as such become integrated into the cosmological structure, objectification is necessarily subject to the fundamental structural constraint of reversibility. In Kayapo belief and practice, therefore, the activities of objectification by which individual bodies and nuclear families are produced (objectified) and developed as realities through a series of transformations as material and spiritual unities of form and content must ultimately be reversed by processes of *deobjectification*. Deobjectification is the result of the dissolution of the synthetic unity of objectified form, subjectified spiritual consciousness and material bodily content of social bodies and persons. To neutralize the threatening consequences of the separation of the spirit from the body (disembodied spirits try to kill their living relatives to keep them company in their fleshless afterlife) the Kayapo have recourse to a substitute, self-destroying body that symbolically achieves the ultimate reversal: the deobjectification of death itself.

## Death's Two Bodies: The Grave Tumulus as Surrogate Corpse and the Death of Death

Kayapo mortuary practices are focused on the graveyard, located in the transitional a-tuk zone just outside of the social space of the village defined by the circle of houses

(Turner 2009, n.d.). This is the zone of social space devoted to transformation processes which convert social into natural identities and *vice versa*.

Kayapo graves enact this process of formal dissolution by deobjectifying themselves. Graves are dug as circular pits, in which the corpse is placed in a flexed position. The pit is then roofed over with logs and mats. The earth from the pit is heaped on the mats, creating a rounded tumulus. Many of the deceased's possessions are broken, their forms thus deliberately destroyed to share in the dissolution of the social and physical form of their owner, and thrown into the grave or on top of the grave mound. Wives and female relatives chop their heads with machetes, symbolically damaging their own forms in sympathetic identification with the deceased. Both male and female relations cut off their hair, and tufts of the shorn hair of mourning relatives are fastened to poles stuck in the ground beside the mound or thrown directly onto it, along with the leaf headbands used by the performers of the death dance if the deceased possessed "beautiful" names.

For a few months following the burial, the close relatives of the deceased may visit the grave site, removing any weeds that spring up on or beside the tumulus. With time, however, the mats on which the tumulus rests decompose, and the earth from the tumulus filters down between the logs into the grave pit. Eventually the tumulus vanishes, the logs also rot, and the grave itself dies, that is, levels itself with the surrounding earth, objectively sharing the dissolution of its owner's body. The grave is the objective aspect of death, the material form of the end and dissolution of personal existence, but it also becomes the process of its own deobjectification – the death and resulting disembodiment of death. As such, it becomes the instrument through which the dissolution of death is turned against death itself, dissolving and deobjectifying its own social form, so far as the relations of the dead person are concerned. As this process is going on in the cemetery, the spirit-form of the deceased separates itself from the decomposing body in the grave and wanders into the forest, becoming an animal-like being, a white ghost which survives for a while in the company of other ghosts, dancing and singing in the village of ghosts, until its ghostly form also finally dissolves into nothing (Turner 2009).

## Conclusion: Bodily Form as Spirit and Agent; Embodiment as Power

The general implications of these ethnographic observations can be summed up as the proposition that the objective forms of bodies, including the natural, or in the case of humans social, configurations of their skins and other surface features such as hair, are not merely inert forms or semiotic categories but schemas, the guiding patterns of intentional or goal-directed activities, including physical growth but in the case of humans also social relations such as marriage and recruitment to social groups (Turner 1994). The patterned surfaces or extensions of bodies embody in this sense the spiritual force or subjective agency which makes bodies take on the forms appropriate to their identities. In cosmological terms, the objective forms of animate beings, and even some inanimate entities, are thus conceived to be imbued with subjective powers of intentional action, or in inanimate cases like the sun and moon, their dynamic counterparts as directed processes. This proposition holds, in principle, for the cosmos

as a whole and all its constituent units, including humans and their social groupings, animals and plants, spirits of the dead, and nonliving beings such as celestial bodies like the sun and moon. In practice, it applies primarily to humans and higher animals, birds and fish, but it also holds in principle for the forms of lower animals, plants and major celestial bodies.

For the Kayapo, in sum, bodiliness includes the animal and cultural aspects of the body, and beyond the body as a singular object, its relations with other bodies, its processes of formation and disintegration, objectification and deobjectification, and the construction of subjectivity and of intersubjective relations. In all these respects, bodiliness is an active principle which consists essentially of activities and transformations rather than practico-inert categories or classifications. These active processes of bodiliness, as I have argued above, comprise not merely the life but also the death of bodies, embodied beings and persons. In these dynamic aspects of bodiliness, form and content behave not merely as descriptive categories but as material forces of embodiment and disembodiment.

Bodiliness, in sum, comprises the tensions and mutual catalysis of these forces as they together constitute the embodied being but are unable permanently to sustain the synthetic unity they produce, which weakens and ultimately disintegrates. Such episodes of deobjectification or disintegration of spirit and flesh may be temporary, as in illness, or terminal, as in death. This inexorable linear destiny, however, may be transcended by the ultimate power of embodiment: reproduction. Reproduction as a total social fact in this context refers not only to biological renewal but the replication of the embodied life process in all its natural and social features: the emergence of form from content, the integration of spirit and body, and the replication of their transient unity in individual and social life…

## REFERENCES

Bird-David, Nurit, 1999 "Animism" Revisited. Personhood, Environment, and Relational Epistemology. Current Anthropology 40 (Supplement): S67–S91.

Descola, Philippe, 1996 Constructing Natures: Symbolic Ecology and Social Practice. *In* Nature and Society: Anthropological Perspectives. P. Descola and G. Pálsson, eds. London and New York: Routledge.

Descola, Philippe, 2005 Par delà nature et culture, Paris: Gallimard.

Turner, Terence, 1980 The Social Skin. *In* Not Work Alone. J. Cherfas and Roger Lewin, eds. pp. 111–140. London: Temple Smith. Reprinted 1993 *In* The Body as Social Text. C. Burroughs and J. Ehrenreich, eds. pp. 15–39. Ames, IA: University of Iowa Press. Reprinted 2007 *In* Beyond the Body Proper: Reading the Anthropology of Material Life. Judith Farquhar and Margaret Locke, eds. pp. 83–103. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Turner, Terence, 1991 We Are Parrots, Twins are Birds: Play of Tropes as Operational Structure. *In* Beyond Metaphor: The Theory of Tropes in Anthropology. J. Fernandez, ed. pp. 121–158. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Turner, Terence, 1992 Kôkô: A Festa do Tamandua. Video. Directed by Terence Turner and Tamòk Mekranoti. Produced by The Kayapo Video Project. São Paulo: Centro de Trabalho Indigenista.

Turner, Terence, 1994 Bodies and Anti-Bodies: Flesh and Fetish in Contemporary Social Theory. *In* Embodiment and Experience. T. Csordas, ed. pp. 27–47. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 27–47. Portuguese translation 2002: Corpos e anti-corpos: Sensualidade

e fetiche na teoria social contemporânea. *In* Imagem e Esquema Corporal. Carlos A. De Mattos Ferreira and Rita Thompson, eds. pp. 141–152. Florianopolis, Brazil: Editora Lovise.

Turner, Terence, 1995 Social Body and Embodied Subject: The Production of Bodies, Actors and Society among the Kayapo. Cultural Anthropology 10(2): 143–170.

Turner, Terence, 1998 The Poetics of Play: Ritual Clowns, Masking and Performative Mimesis Among the Kayapo. *In* The Play of Gods and Men: Essays in Play and Performance. Studien zur Sozialen und Rituellen Morphologie. Peter Koepping, ed. Hamburg: Lit Verlag. Republished 2002 with revised text.

Turner, Terence, 2009 Valuables, Value and Commodities Among the Kayapo of Central Brazil. *In* The Occult Life of Things: Native Amazonian Theories of Materiality and Personhood. Fernando Santos-Granero, ed. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Turner, Terence, 2009 The Crisis of Late Structuralism: Animism and Perspectivism: Rethinking Culture, Nature, Spirit, and Bodiliness. Tipiti: Journal of the Society for the Anthropology of Lowland South America 9(1).

Turner, Terence, n.d. Cosmology, Objectification and Animism in Indigenous Amazonia.

# CHAPTER 7 COLONIALISM
## *Bodies under Colonialism*

*Janice Boddy*

This chapter is about embodiment, labor, and reproduction in the late British Empire, focusing ethnographically on the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.[1] Colonialism was and is an inherently corporeal enterprise, yet scholars differ in how they address this fact. Attention to the tacit everyday bodiliness of colonial experience distinguishes much anthropological, feminist, and critical historical literature from scholarship that mines a more conventionally heroic, event-oriented vein. Where the latter may well draw attention to the overt violence, forced migration and settlement, or spread of disease that colonialism entails, the former emphasizes the subtle yet palpable pressures brought to bear on colonial subjects to "normalize" and "civilize" their daily lives (e.g. Arnold 1993; Comaroff 1985; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 1992, 1997; Hunt 1999; McClintock 1995; Stoler 2002). The colonized were frequently admonished to relinquish their customary practices – habits of dress, work, bodily comportment, speech, adornment, cleanliness and domestic order, foods they deemed edible and how they consumed them, how they gave birth, fell sick and were healed, expressed their sexuality – in order to adopt those that colonial authorities endorsed or held to be commonsense. Recommended ways of living reflected colonizers' guiding assumptions about appropriate behavior, as well as their convictions about the capacities of black and brown peoples whose physical and social differences from Europeans had been elaborated for several centuries in all manner of scholarly and popular publications, advertisements, and pictorial art (e.g. Fabian 1983; Gilman 1985; Levine 2004; McClintock 1995; Morgan 2005). How colonized peoples complied with, embraced, and resisted European ways, or creatively folded them into their lives, are prevalent anthropological concerns.

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

My discussion concentrates on British colonial agents and the Muslim women they sought to reform after 1918, when Sudan was deemed pacified enough to undergo accelerated economic development and become profitable to the metropolitan state. Attempts to "improve" Sudan and Sudanese owed much to changes in British sensibilities wrought by the trauma of the First World War that led to a re-visioning of the Empire as progressive, profitable, and "family-friendly." This "maternalistic" post-war imperial phase (Bush 2007; Pedersen 2001) was marked in Sudan by a slight but appreciable loosening of the martial ethos in place before 1914, when few European women had visited, marriage was forbidden to political officers during their long probations, and even the wives of senior officials were scarce on the ground save for brief winter stays in the relative comfort of Khartoum. The incremental success of British women's emancipation during the war, and the catastrophic toll of the conflict on men, meant the post-war Empire was more open to white women's involvement as colonial wives, missionaries, and professionals than before (Bush 2007).

The argument that follows is mindful of Stoler's critical reading of Foucault's *The History of Sexuality* (Foucault 1990) and her development of its relevance to colonial contexts (1996, 2002). Stoler underscores the crucial ways that circuits of knowledge and practice between metropoles and their colonies worked to define and defend the bourgeois European self, whose capacities were affirmed by entwined assessments of class and race achieved by contrast to nonEuropean "others." Stoler's research focuses on settler colonies, especially those of the Indes, where anxieties about sexual mixing between locals and Europeans were rife. My emphasis must be different. While sexual boundary-work took place in colonial Sudan and Victorian racial categories were all-important, Sudan was never a place for Europeans to make their homes. Even after 1918 few European women lived in Sudan full-time, older children remained in the U.K. to attend school, and men returned annually for long summer leaves. Moreover, given the mores and presumed volatility of Muslim Sudanese, administrators feared that cross-racial liaisons would have dire repercussions, and remarkably few seem to have taken place (Collins and Deng 1984; Deng and Daly 1989). Sudan was a geopolitical outpost, ruled by a relatively small, mobile garrison of British officers and quasi-civilian employees for whom "racial mixing" referred to relations among Sudanese "tribes" and conjured the chaos of "detribalization."[2] Biopolitical projects in the Muslim north were overwhelmingly concerned with stabilizing indigenous populations, maximizing their growth, and securing a supply of tractable, disciplined labor. Some background will help set the stage.

## The Problem of Labor

From the early '19th' century the reaches of the Nile south of Aswan had been dominated by Ottoman Egyptian imperialists whose interests were deeply enmeshed with those of European powers. In 1821 the Ottomans seized the Funj kingdom in Sudan and established a colonial capital at Khartoum. Thenceforth, Sudan's riverain Muslim and largely Arabic-speaking farmers were required to produce labor-intensive commercial crops for export – sesame, tobacco, indigo, cotton – as well as meet their subsistence needs. Given the peculiarities of Ottoman monopolies and demands, agricultural work increasingly came to rely on slaves abducted from the "pagan" south by

Egyptian, European, and "Arab" profiteers (Bjorkelo 2003; Daly 1986; Holt 1966). By the end of the century slaves did virtually all domestic and agricultural work in central and northern regions where they comprised as much as a third of the population (Hargey 1981; Spaulding 1985, 1988; Warburg 1978).

The mid 19th-century sea change in European scruples had, however, inspired a wave of campaigns to quash the traffic in slaves from southern Sudan. Insofar as abolition efforts "struck at an important source of wealth" and the "basis of the agrarian economy" (Holt 1970: 32) they provoked unrest in the Muslim north. In 1884, a successful revolt under the Sudanese Mahdi, Mohammad Ahmad, resulted in the collapse of Ottoman rule and its replacement by an indigenous Islamic state. Known as the *Mahdiya*, the regime remained in place for fourteen years, though much of the Nilotic north became disaffected partway through. Between 1896 and 1898 a joint British and Egyptian force advanced up the Nile in order to restore control of the river and secure southern Red Sea ports for British-dominated Egypt (with the Suez and the sea route to India firmly in mind), stop the slave trade, and avenge the death of General Gordon, Governor-General of Ottoman Sudan in the Khedive's employ, who had been besieged at Khartoum and killed by Mahdist rebels in 1885. The venture was also part of the infamous "scramble for Africa," enabling Britain to thwart a potential French monopoly over the Sahel, check the aspirations of other European powers, and reinforce imperial interests elsewhere on the continent (see Daly 1986; Holt 1970; Holt and Daly 1979).

Sudan was thus a late and incomplete addition to the British Empire, entering as a joint conquest of Britain and British-controlled Ottoman Egypt; it was known as the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan until its independence in 1956. Unlike areas of imperial Africa under Colonial Office purview, Sudan's British Governor-General reported to the Foreign Office in London and did so indirectly, through the British Resident in Cairo. The colony was run by a cadre of British officers with scores of Egyptians as intermediate supervisory and civilian personnel. To mollify both Egyptians and Muslim Sudanese, Christian missionaries were forbidden to proselytize in the north. Yet the joint political venture, financed for the most part by Egypt but effectively under British control, was deeply fraught from the start. The rivalry between political partners affected colonial policy and practice, and should always be borne in mind.

British officials were convinced that during the Mahdiya, Sudan had been severely depopulated, and by its violent end there had clearly been substantial dislocation and loss.[3] This meant, however, that there was now ample accessible farmland despite cultivation being hemmed to the Nile in the north by desert wastes. With peace came resettlement, land registration, and the resumption of farming, especially of grain. At first, low taxes meant to inhibit unrest and improve food supplies gave little inducement for workers to be coaxed from their rural livings. "Free" labor was scarce for colonial projects such as building roads and laying rails, and wages were therefore high. It was felt that as the population revived and Islamic inheritance rules were applied to registered plots, farming would become less lucrative for some, and a paid labor force would naturally arise. But it did not, or at least not quickly enough to satisfy colonial demands.

Like other European powers the British viewed their subjects in ethnic and racial terms and ranked their capacities for work on an evolutionary scale. They considered "Soudanese" – here meaning southerners, slaves, and former slaves – to be strong, energetic workers but innately undisciplined; "Arabs" or northern Sudanese were possessed of a "slave owning mentality" and averse to manual toil. The "*Fallata*,"

Nigerian Muslims ostensibly en route to Mecca and "anxious to make money" to further their progress, were deemed "the most useful population," "thrifty hard working people, willing to work for small wages."[4] But while Fallata were encouraged to prolong their stay in Sudan, their suspected Mahdist sympathies and involvement in the imperfectly suppressed slave trade cast doubts on their political loyalties. What was wanted was a paid labor force of freeborn Muslim northern Sudanese men, considered naturally more biddable, less unruly than former southern slaves or "detribalized" folk, and more educable than Fallata in government-approved forms of Islam.

Remarkably, slavery was tacitly endorsed by the early regime. Despite public avowals to the contrary, and regardless that stopping the human trade had been a pretext for invading Sudan, during the first decades of British rule local officials were obliged to capture runaway slaves and return them to their owners. Government foretold famine and feared the rise of a disorderly urban underclass if "servants" (as they were euphemistically called) abandoned the land. One highly placed administrator regarded slavery as "an essential and natural part of Sudanese society and economy" and did "everything in his power" to preserve it (Warburg 1978: 233). In 1924, two disillusioned junior officials created a scandal by exposing the situation in the London press; a League of Nations inquiry ensued (Daly 1986: 444–45; Sikainga 1996: 100–102).

That same year, a major pro-Egypt insurrection in Sudan led British authorities to repatriate Egyptians in all "sensitive" (political, educational) posts (Holt and Daly 1979: 134; Daly 1986: 305). Moreover, a massive government-supported cotton-growing scheme had just got underway in Sudan's Gezira, the fertile clay plain between the White and Blue Niles. Planned before the war and postponed for its duration, the Gezira Scheme was expected to make Sudan financially independent and weaken Egypt's sway. The project entailed building a dam to divert the Blue Nile, leveling fields, digging a network of irrigation ditches and canals, all to feed English textile mills with long-staple cotton and diminish their reliance on increasingly uncertain Egyptian supplies. These events, combined with the perceived incapacity for steady work of "unruly" and "susceptible" "detribalized" former slaves and southerners, intensified the government's dilemma (Hargey 1981; Sikainga 1996). Where would they find a vigorous, steadfast, tractable, educable, and benignly "orthodox" Muslim population, a stable number of whom depended on wages to meet their needs? It was clear that the northern Arab population would have to grow, and residents' "indolent" habits of work would have to improve.

It was thus that the colonial government began attending to the health and education of the civilian population in the north. Although post-war efforts were modest in scope and predictably subject to political constraints, British professionals were tasked with expanding the workforce, instilling industrious sensibilities, educating bodies, hearts, and minds. Their roles were in essence biopolitical.

## BIOPOLITICS

> *"Perhaps we do believe in the superstitions [the European] mentioned, yet he believes in a new, a contemporary superstition – the superstition of statistics. So long as we believe in a god, let it be a god that is omnipotent. But of what use are statistics?"*
>
> (Tayeb Salih, *Season of Migration to the North* (1981: 59–60))

To suggest, à la Foucault, that the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan was a biopolitical state is not to say that colonial power was exercised indirectly or only took "capillary" forms. Though never entirely sure of their supremacy, the British were a military presence and their measures were subject to backing by force. Yet state initiatives in health and education rarely bore obvious signs of political control, however much designed to manage individual bodies and selves; the same can be said for practices like registering births and deaths, collecting statistics on farming, housing conditions, or the prevalence of disease – indeed, gathering ethnographic facts – that enabled authorities to monitor the country's constituent populations. The links between disciplinary and normalizing practices were intimate, but also obscure, the efforts glossed as humanitarian or undertaken in the name of science. Thus in 1930 the writer Odette Keun, known for her anti-imperialist views, opined with just a hint of irony, "The Sudan is the latest thing in European exploitation, and it is the best. The English rulers struck straight out for an incredible objective – the welfare of the conquered alone" (Keun 1930: 9–10). In colonial Sudan terms such as "welfare" and "humanitarian" invoked a specific image of humanity ideally comprising peaceful, diligent, self-controlled individuals, reliable workers and "good" mothers, responsible to their betters and themselves. Improvements to the "welfare of the conquered" advanced interests that were not necessarily the colonizeds' own, creating political entanglements that both benefited and unobtrusively subordinated Sudanese.

Stoler (1996, 2002) persuasively argues that the historical myopia attributed to Foucault is overblown, that he recognized racial discourses forged in colonial contexts as belonging to "the technologies of sex that arose in the eighteenth century to regulate sexual conduct and by which populations could be expanded and controlled" (2002: 149). But there is another sense in which Foucault's approach is inescapably Eurocentric, for his genealogical investigations of the modern subject were reflexively predicated on the bounded individual body of Western philosophy, even as he parsed its changing deployments over time. Modern disciplinary power affirms and enables discrete biological entities, whose individualized and racialized capacities were the key elements of the colonial state: biological units to be counted, categorized, segregated or combined, assigned to space in precise numbers per square foot or mile, organized, educated and improved.

This was an ontology that nonEuropean peoples did not inevitably espouse, peoples whose orientations were more relational than unitary and individualistic (Boddy 2007; Comaroff 1985; Piot 1999; Turner 1994). And it was open to local critique: a prominent image in the Sudanese spirit possession ritual called *zar*, in which ethereal avatars of British officials (among other foreign groups) temporarily embody themselves in local women so as to act in the human word, is that of the simple chair – a quintessentially colonial image: one body, one seat. In zar rites, chairs may be arranged in orderly rows to accommodate individual clients waiting to consult a European doctor spirit or government bureaucrat, suggesting not only unitary order but subservience and a hierarchical orientation to time. Alternatively, a single chair may be positioned to signify the incumbent's superiority over those seated on the ground or on native divans (Boddy 1989; Constantinides 1972). In the early 20th century (and largely today) everyday furniture – low-slung rope beds on which all ages lounge several to a piece – was differently disposed, with gender the most relevant criterion by which people positioned themselves. Zar imagery graphically shows the salience to

the colonial regime of individualism, rank, and unitary equivalence, seen through the eyes of colonial subjects and their heirs.

Zar goes further. In allowing that multiple persons or minds can inhabit a single human body, it confounds the Western logic of individualism in which one mind and one body form a discrete and circumscribed unit and which grants primacy to mind over body in most respects. The commonplace view that the psychosocial self "owns" the flesh in which it is housed is historically and culturally specific. According to T.O. Tierney (1999), it arose during the Reformation with the personalization of providence, entailing a concern for self-care and the medical regimen, whence it matured into the secular self-contained Enlightenment subject that yet dominates Western thought. As Csordas (1999: 144) concedes in light of ethnographic evidence, it is possible that "individuation, the creation of the individual that we understand … as the core of the ideological structure of Western culture, has as its condition of possibility a particular mode of inhabiting the world as a bodily being." In some societies the body was "neither a subject of experience nor an object of discourse," a fact that "challenges the generalizability of conventional Euro-American understandings of a person articulated in phrases like having a body, being a body, made up of body and mind, or being a mind in a body" (Csordas 1999: 144). Persuaded by in their own assumptions, however, colonial Britons regarded Sudanese women's conviction that "their" bodies could accommodate several sentient beings at once as evidence of their irrationality and devotion to "superstition."

Similarly, in colonial Sudan and perhaps even now, the immense significance of kin to one's social position and sense of self meant that northern Sudanese adhered to a more relational concept of the person than Western sensibilities typically afford. It struck Britons as unnatural and absurd that morality seemed less a matter of individual conscience to Arab Sudanese than of family-enforced conventions on dress, comportment, and body modification (Beasley 1992 *passim*). They were especially repulsed by custom of "pharaonic circumcision," a severe form of what is today called female genital mutilation (FGM) or female genital cutting (FGC), in which the labia are pared away and remaining skin sewn together to "infibulate" (cover or "veil") the vaginal opening. Genital cutting was performed on both sexes in colonial Sudan; the complementary practices were means to gender children and make them fully social beings by inscribing on their respective bodies the key social orientations of Sudanese life (Boddy 1989, 2002): outwardly focused (male) or inwardly focused (female). They also marked membership in specific religious and ethnic groups and, along with facial scarring, were performed in pre-pubescence as essential preparation for marriage and adulthood. Colonial officials knew that male circumcision is obligatory for Muslims and were therefore loath to interfere; because most Sudanese (erroneously) believed that female genital cutting was also required by Islam, officials did not oppose the mild "*sunna*" or religiously permitted rite, or even the far more intrusive clitoridectomy for girls. Though reluctant to ban the almost-universally practiced pharaonic procedure for fear of provoking unrest, they quietly condemned extensive labial excision and infibulation. For without a birth attendant to cut through her genital scar an infibulated woman and her baby were liable to die during labor, and even with assistance delivery was dangerous and unclean.

A remedy had been suggested in 1920 by Grace (Molly) Crowfoot, wife of the Director of Education in Khartoum and a scholar in her own right, who had observed

"the barbarous customs at circumcision and birth,"[5] something a European man would never have been able to do. Crowfoot insisted that the director of the medical department seek authorization to start a school for midwives in Omdurman, the native town across the Nile from Khartoum. The fact that she herself was a medically trained midwife surely enforced the urgency of her request; the Midwives Training School (MTS) admitted its first class of four traditional midwives in 1921. Its founding matron was Mabel Wolff, who had trained with Crowfoot at Clapham Maternity Hospital in London and was practicing in Egypt when proposed by Crowfoot for the post.[6]

The mission of the MTS was "to overcome, combat and improve harmful rites and customs" by instilling in native midwives a knowledge of simple hygiene and biomedical birthing techniques.[7] The undertaking had a double purpose, for traditional midwives (*dayat*) performed circumcisions on girls, then cut parturient women to enable delivery, and restitched their genital wounds after birth. Knowing that the pharaonic practice would not be ended by fiat, and understanding the need to gain the trust of dayat and their clients in order to make a success of the school, Wolff devised a modified, less physically destructive operation; this she taught dayat to perform with scrupulous attention to hygiene and "patient" after-care. She encouraged trainees to publicize the harms of female genital cutting and hoped that with greater education and the introduction of progressively milder operations, the custom would die out or be replaced by the sunna rite in which only the hood of the clitoris is removed.[8]

The problem for Sudan's colonial officials was not female genital cutting *per se*, but infibulation, which was widely thought to obstruct fertility. The northern population had grown too slowly under British peace, and mortality during the influenza pandemic of 1918–19 only aggravated the shortage of labor (Bell 1998: 296). In 1924 circumstances combined to bring the problem to a head. Given the press revelations in London, domestic slavery faced an imminent demise; moreover Egyptian personnel, suspected of fomenting rebellion, were about to be sent home. To make matters worse, a rising incidence of malaria, linked, ironically, to leveling and flooding the Gezira for cotton, was impeding population growth (Bell 1999: 108). Indeed, the colony's medical director, O. H. F. Atkey, was convinced that malaria and venereal disease, not pharaonic circumcision, were chiefly to blame for low birthrates and high infant mortality.[9] Political officers, unwilling to doubt the benefits of progress, claimed the reverse: to them the offender was women's insistence on pharaonic circumcision, despite the reservations of northern men. Attention was thus neatly deflected from Gezira engineering onto Muslim women's "superstitious" and "backward" natures: to ensure the prosperity of Sudan, women's bodies and their mothering skills would have to be revised. In 1924 Sudan's civil secretary, H.A. MacMichael, therefore opened a "Female Circumcision" file, and the intelligence director, C.A. Willis, wrote to district officers apprising them of the need to curb the practice:

> Setting aside the ordinary motives of humanity, the Government is deeply interested in the increase of population and I believe it to be within the bounds of accuracy to say that no very great propaganda with the male population of the country can be expected until the female portion of it which controls the children for all their early and impressionable years, is raised to a higher standard of mental and moral development, which seems impossible as long as the custom of Pharaic [*sic*] circumcision holds.[10]

It was hoped that Mabel Wolff, who was joined at the MTS in 1930 by her sister Gertrude, a nursing matron in Khartoum, would help to put things right.

## MTS Lessons

Wolff's intermediate operation came to be known among Sudanese as *ṯahûr_al-ḥukûma*, "government" purification / circumcision, in contrast to the pharaonic or Egyptian form (*ṯahûr_faraowniya*, *ṯahûr miṣriy*), which the Wolffs and their countrymen vilified. The distinction between "government" and "Egyptian" rites was a clever use of British imagery by Sudanese, identifying Egypt as the source of harm and Britain as the guardian of local tradition, rationalized and scientifically improved.

Consideration of the Wolffs' techniques requires some sense of the world upon which colonial understandings encroached.[11] In northern Sudan, the covering or closing of bodily orifices is morally enjoined and produces a valued symbolic state. A host of rites and practices, including infibulation, enhance and protect the fertility of "red" blood in the womb, which is especially endangered by exposure to spirits (*jinn*). Jinn are sentient beings with human-like traits (gender, age, ethnicity, profession) but a distinctive suite of powers and inclinations. Such entities, which include the class of zar spirits or *zayran*, are drawn to bodily openings, through which they can enter a human body and take possession of it. Zayran are especially prone to "seize" (*masak*) a woman's womb, thereby causing genital hemorrhage (*nazîf*) or miscarriage (*dufag*) in a bid to convince her family to fulfill their demands, among them food, clothing, and other items consistent with a spirit's unique yet always "foreign" personality. Part of the work of a zar ceremony is to convince a woman that any reproductive problems she experiences do not originate in her body – they are not her fault – but are caused by capricious exotic zayran who have seized her womb. The diagnosis confirms that she is inherently fertile (why else would such spirits intrude?) and thereby reinforces her sense of self, which is closely identified with her procreative role and bound up with her blood. Thus a successful zar curing rite, in which a troublesome spirit is convinced to relax its hold on its human, typically female, host, is the ethereal counterpart of remedial genital stitching after birth: both renew the integrity and potency of the female body.

The defensive closure of a woman's womb through infibulation echoes the protection afforded by high walls surrounding a family's home. Sociality, indeed life itself, is ideally shielded from human, spirit, and other dangers of surrounding desert wastes. These contexts in turn share qualities with enclosed, moist foods such as tinned fish, grapefruit, mangoes, and watermelons that are said to be "clean" and to build one's blood when consumed. The logic, which continues into other realms of experience and material domains, is circular, recursive. Meaning is harbored in lived congruities; it is self-evident to participants, requiring no elucidation to be clear.

For their part, the Wolffs gave lessons in Arabic, incorporating words from "women's vocabulary."[12] Since few trainees were literate, they had to learn in practical, tangible ways. Thus the sisters decided to work *with* rather than *against* local knowledge, taking heed of pupils' past experience and embodied memory. They used homey images that first summoned, then sought to reorganize students' dispositions, building bridges between local knowledge and scientific truths by devising analogies to the objects and acts of Sudanese daily life with which women's bodies are closely linked, though

whether the sisters grasped the subtleties of that relation is not known. This gave rise to an ingenious and powerful synthesis of biomedical and lay techniques that bent to local custom even while attempting, with mixed success, to undermine it. For instance, in her initial report on the MTS Mabel wrote:

> I illustrate by local colour all their lectures as I find they understand and assimilate them better, – viz. in giving them an anatomy and physiology lesson I compare the body to a house and the organs [to] the furniture – the functions of the lungs as windows that air the house etc. etc.[13]

Or again, "the body resembles a furnished house and all the contents have a special use."[14] House-as-body was an image the students could quickly grasp, but not necessarily as Wolff proposed. For in local thought the house was not just an opportune metaphor for "the" human body, it was metonymous with a *female* body, and an *infibulated* female body at that. Wolff did not invent this association but she surely invoked it, and unwittingly perhaps confirmed the values of purity and life-enhancing closure expressed in the pharaonic rite. In another lesson she states:

> Most illnesses are caused by the entrance into the body by way of the mouth [*khashm*], the eyes, the nostrils, through the skin or a wound (or ulcer) of minute living things which cannot be seen except under a microscope. Just as there are a great variety of insects and seeds, so there are microbes… There are microbes that will turn milk sour and meat putrid and food poisonous, but if food is sterilized and *kept in sealed tins*, the microbes cannot penetrate and the contents such as tomato sauce, milk, sardines and numerous other foodstuffs, will keep good for long periods but as soon as the tin is opened microbes get on the food and it will soon be poisoned and unfit to eat.
>
> *If our bodies are healthy and strong like the sealed tins*, the microbes cannot harm us, but if microbes get a hold of us, they may give us some illness according to what microbe has infected us.[15] (my emphases)

The analogies made good vernacular sense, but drew into question the MTS task of substituting "rational" science for harmful practices and "fallacious beliefs." Of course, to the Wolffs the resonances were fortuitous or heuristic, symbolic, not sincere.

Still, their methods undoubtedly modified students' sensibilities to some degree. On a wall in the midwifery classroom hung a telling illustration of an exposed human head and torso, its rectangularly drawn internal parts forming an assembly line of workers producing material goods. It was labeled "The Human Factory."[16] Students were implicitly asked to replace associations between the house and the agentive, infibulated female body with "scientific" images of a masculine-looking body as a modern, automated industrial plant. To the extent that the mechanical image was taken up, students would have found themselves distanced from their cultural selves and their agency as women reassigned. But their agency as midwives – managers of "human factories" – would remain undiminished, and even, perhaps, be enhanced.

The attempt to strengthen midwives' agency vis à vis their clients may be seen in other changes the sisters introduced. The Wolffs were determined to reform the customary upright posture for giving birth in which a mother-to-be knelt clinging to a rope suspended from the beam of a house, with the midwife seated before her waiting to assist. The sisters declared the position brutish and unnatural, claiming it made

delivery more painful, strenuous, and slow. They allowed limited use of the rope in the early phases of labor, but as soon as a woman entered stage-three she was obliged to lie on a bed.[17] The recumbent position may well have seemed more civilized to the Wolffs, in keeping British practice, but it also gave the midwife greater control when opening the mother's circumcision scar and reduced the odds of her cutting the infant's head. That said, elderly women who had delivered both ways told me that labor was quicker and less painful "on the rope." Yet the anesthetic administered by the medical midwife prior to cutting was offered only to those who reclined; for want of this, most women said they complied with the Wolffs' approach.

In this process, women's agency – the close identification of female personhood with reproduction – was being tacitly undermined. Childbearing was being cast as something to be managed by others whose understandings differed from the mother's own. When the Wolffs introduced prenatal clinics in 1932, they used another familiar image to convey their intent. They made an analogy to cooking that at once invoked local meanings and rearranged them to accommodate a biomedical view. Was it usual, they asked, to leave a pot with food on the fire "until the food was burnt and spoilt or was it usual to occasionally inspect the contents of the pot?" Soon "pot-check" (*khashf al-halla*) had become an idiom for "prenatal examination."[18]

In rural northern Sudan, a range of practical metaphors linked pregnancy to making the batter for *kisra,* the native bread: both entailed blending female fluid (blood / water) and male seed (semen / sorghum flour) in an impervious container (infibulated womb / covered bowl or jar) where the mix could be left to prove (Boddy 1989, 1997). Bearing children, like preparing and baking kisra, was something only women were naturally, properly, equipped to do. But pregnancy as depicted by the Wolffs was like making a sauce or stew: mechanical, curiously asexual and disembodied. The "pot" was merely a receptacle for ingredients and the vehicle in which they were transformed. Because things *happened to* "the pot" it required periodic visual surveillance. Apropos the Wolffs' imagery, the pot / womb was a passive object, not itself an actor, not part of a woman's self. And the trained midwife, not the mother-to-be, was the "cook," the manager who scrutinized and supported the development of what the "pot" contained.

The Wolffs sought to train both a cadre of medical professionals who returned to their communities to advance maternal and infant health, and the mothers who came to rely on them, whose bodies were made healthier, more productive, and more useful to the colonial state. In crude terms, the state thus gained access to its subjects' everyday lives. Islamic modesty codes and British reluctance to breach the sovereignty of domestic space had made Muslim women all but inaccessible to male political officers and civil servants. Few northern women were household servants (such jobs were typically given to men) and, save an elite few who attended the small Church Missionary Society school for girls,[19] they were not subject to missionary appeal. Yet infibulation, precisely because it requires women to seek assistance at birth, offered an expedient gap through which the state's civilizing projects could squeeze themselves into northern Sudanese homes. By 1921 all midwives, whether medically trained or not, were required to obtain licenses, acquire basic supplies, and maintain registers of their cases (via male amanuenses) so the medical department could "keep some slight control or track of them."[20] The best of the trained women became MTS staff midwives – classroom demonstrators, teachers in their own right. They were regularly

sent on inspection tours to monitor licensed dayat in rural districts, examine their appearances and the trained midwives' kits, preach hygiene, and exhort villagers to abandon "Pharaoh's circumcision" (Boddy 2007).

Since trained midwives were an inexpensive way for officials to promote the health of native women and thus, as they supposed, support and monitor population growth, it would have made sense to fund them from the public purse. But as vigorously as Wolff pled the cause, nominal stipends for trained dayat were granted only after years of wearying struggle with medical and political staff. Whatever change was effected in birthing and other customs was due largely to the dedicated efforts of midwives themselves, whose training made them arbiters between British and Sudanese worlds. They formed a small legion of native agents in what Hunt (1999: 6), writing of the Congo, has pithily called "a hygienic form of 'indirect rule'."

## Challenges and New Directions

For seventeen years the Wolffs taught the modified, "government" form of female circumcision. And, linked to this or not, the population began to recover well. Yet there was little if any decline in the pharaonic practice overall; instead, evidence emerged of its spread in the 1920s among groups such as the Nuba, who had previously not performed it. According to officials, appropriation of the custom was not connected "with the spread of Islamisation even in the native mind," but instead, with the spread of "Arab" influence: Nuba seeking to rise in social status had begun speaking Arabic and adopting female circumcision as markers of prestige. "Personally," wrote the Governor of Kordofan in 1930, "I feel very strongly that it is our duty as guardians of primitive people like the Nuba to prevent the adoption by them of this brutal and dangerous practice."[21]

The spread of pharaonic circumcision even in its modified form was disconcerting to officials, who doubtless feared censure in Britain that "the barbaric practice" continued still, despite three or more decades of enlightened British rule. They thus deemed the Wolffs' methods, but especially their modified circumcision technique, to be "privileged" information; discussion of the MTS beyond Sudan Government circles demanded delicacy and tact.[22]

Indeed, matters had become especially awkward in 1929 when the so-called "female circumcision crisis" erupted in Kenya, pitting Christian missionaries against Kikuyu nationalists over a form of female genital cutting just slightly less severe than that performed in Sudan. For decades missionaries in Kenya had campaigned against the Kikuyu practice known as *irua* and its attendant communal rites. Then in 1929, the Church of Scotland Mission upped the stakes by demanding that congregants pledge opposition to the custom and forbid their daughters to undergo it. Further, they barred the children of nonrenouncers from enrolling in CSM schools (Kenyatta 1961: 130). Jomo Kenyatta, anthropologist and Kikuyu nationalist leader, loudly opposed the move and government interventions to support it: "The moral code of the tribe is bound up with this custom" which "symbolises the unification of the whole tribal organization"; moreover, the abolition of irua would "prevent the Gikuyu from perpetuating that spirit of collectivism and national solidarity which they have been able to maintain from time immemorial" (Kenyatta 1961: 134, 135).

The customary practice flouted missionary ideals. Converts were taught to regard the rites as "savage and barbaric, worthy only of heathens who live in perpetual sin under the influence of the Devil" (Kenyatta 1961 [1938]: 153). Continued allegiance to irua precluded the moral transformation *of individuals* that Christianity required (Snively 1994). Indeed, conversion was a rival rite of passage, shorn of irua's communal dimensions. It required no large-scale ceremony, merely that someone accept Jesus as her *personal* savior, repudiate her "heathen" past, and adopt a wholly Christian way of life. By breaking with Kikuyu convention the missionaries believed a girl would be free to develop a "normal" self. But a body indelibly marked for collective tradition and a mind "corrupted" by irua's "evils" precluded Christian existence, with its emphasis on autonomous individuals separately endowed with "reason" and "free will." And, as the missionaries saw it, irua victimized women twice, assuring them suffering and subjugation in the present, as well as exclusion from eternal life in Christ.[23]

To gain support for its stance the CSM held public information meetings in London, and the disclosures sparked women members of Parliament to act. They and several male colleagues formed an all-party "Committee for the Protection of Coloured Women in the Crown Colonies," drafted a list of questions, and began gathering evidence from witnesses with African experience – missionaries and government officials, including some from Sudan – in the closing months of 1929. Then in early 1930 came the reported murder of Miss Hulda Stumpf, a member of the American Africa Inland Mission to the Kikuyu, whose body had been found in her house fifty miles from Nairobi on the morning of January 3. The details in *The Times* were disturbing: "The medical evidence discounted any theory of rape but inclined to the view that certain unusual wounds were due to deliberate mutilation such as might have been caused by the use of a knife employed by natives in a form of tribal operation."[24]

Sudan's civil secretary scrapbooked the article into his "Female Circumcision" file along with others detailing the event, with no commentary and little subsequent documentation. For several years, abolition efforts in Sudan were left to the quiet if controversial methods of the MTS.[25]

Toward the close of 1937 the Wolffs retired from service in Sudan. Their battles with political and medical officers over funding and approach had finally worn them down, and high-ranking administrators were not entirely sad to see them go. Though the British regarded pharaonic circumcision as no less evil than before, Sudan's birthrate had risen despite the practice's resilience and spread.[26] Indeed, by 1938 the population was calculated to be at least twice the size it had been four decades before.[27] Now, officials ventured, was the time to try another tack.

The Wolffs' successor, Elaine Hills-Young, was chosen for her refusal to tolerate "retrograde" Sudanese customs. She forbade trained midwives to perform female genital cutting of any kind and ceased all instruction in the modified technique.[28] It is hardly surprising, however, that few trained dayat complied. The majority continued to circumcise in secret, lest they forfeit the public trust they had taken such pains to win. And their small irregular government stipends meant that illicit infibulations and post-partum repairs remained, as Wolff reflected, "the most lucrative part of [the midwives'] work."[29] Students may have secretly learned the modified technique from graduates or staff midwives, or, emulating dayat of the rope, reverted to more radical forms (Boddy 2007: 266).

During the Second World War, Hills-Young and other British professionals in Sudan collaborated on what they called their anti-circumcision "crusade." They were supported by Sudanese staff midwives and women teachers who traveled throughout the north warning against the practice (Beasley 1992: 129; Sanderson 1981: 87). Most mothers were reluctant to change. Yet if mothers seemed beyond reach, schoolgirls – future mothers – might be convinced.

Girls' schools had been slow to develop in colonial Sudan. The few that existed in the first four decades of British rule stressed "domestic science": housework, cooking, and sewing. Toward the end of the 1930s a new Controller of Girls' Education, Ina Beasley, encouraged lessons in hygiene and infant care with a focus on order and efficiency (Beasley 1992: 58–66). Given women's power over children in "their early and impressionable years," "progressive" mothering techniques were expected to generate healthier, better-adjusted, more mature citizens from a European point of view. Girls were enjoined to abandon traditional practices such as sleeping with infants and nursing on demand, as these were thought to induce character weakness in adults.

Mature women were not neglected. In 1941 Hills-Young and her staff opened a Government Child Welfare Centre near the MTS devoted to practical lessons in living an orderly domestic life:

> We had a room converted into a model women's quarter, with all native furnishing but kept clean, tidy and simple. The mothers would often say: "Oh, but this is just like ours." Then I would say, "Yes, to a certain extent, but we have shelves for the dishes and do not stack them on the mud floor under the bed or table. Also our windows have wire netting to keep out the flies and the beds have mosquito nets, even baby's cot, also we have small beds for children so that they can sleep alone."[30]

Women were counseled to limit and schedule feeding times using the position of the sun for reference, as few households owned a clock.[31] Though babies in northern Sudan were (and are) seldom out of their mothers' arms, those of pupil midwives were placed in wooden playpens while their mothers attended class.[32] All this was supposed to amend character "deficiencies" in Sudanese by encouraging greater independence, wholesome self-restraint, orderly behavior, and a rational sense of time. The novelties of playpens, scheduled feedings, and "sleeping alone" pressed European individuation on hesitant mothers whose more encompassing concepts of body and person were deemed primitive, irrational, and wrong.

When pharaonic circumcision did not significantly abate despite support from Sudanese religious leaders and professional women and men, the "crusaders" resorted to less cautious means. They circulated information about the persistence of the practice to Parliament and the British press. Ultimately their efforts led to a law being framed that made performing the pharaonic operation a criminal offence. Importantly, however, the act legitimized sunna circumcision and clitoridectomy (neither of them commonly practiced in Sudan), showing again that reproduction, rather than personal fulfillment, was the principal issue at play in colonial projects to improve native women's health.

In 1945, when Sudan's council mooted the forthcoming law, a predictable spate of pharaonic procedures ensued – an "orgy of operations" in Beasley's words – performed even on extremely young girls, sometimes with distressing results.[33] Yet to claim that

Sudanese acted from "superstition" or "ignorance" would be to grant misleading universality to European ideals. Within the parameters of their conventional understandings, Sudanese had sought to create properly gendered moral persons before they would be forbidden to do so by decree. Indeed the ruling proved ineffective and, for political reasons, was rarely enforced (Boddy 2007).

## Conclusion

According to Csordas (1999: 144) "studies under the rubric of embodiment are not 'about' the body *per se*. Instead they are about culture and experience insofar as these can be understood from the standpoint of bodily-being-in-the world." For Sudanese in colonial, and indeed post-colonial, Sudan, sexual modification intended the body toward a child's ultimate moral and social role. In the language of Euro-American social science, "gender" was primary and the body was fashioned to support it from an indicative but always imprecise anatomical start: that of boys born with feminine genital "veils," girls with uncovered masculine protrusions. Sex-respective operations aligned pre-pubescent bodies with their "outwardly" political and economic, or "inwardly" reproductive and domestic responsibilities as adults (Boddy 1989, 1997; cf. Holy 1991). To the British, however, the sexed body was natural and given, essential, the very basis of the self. Colonial activists took no comfort from the fact that less intrusive forms of female genital cutting had received government sanction under the 1946 law. They claimed that if a girl was left uncut her female essence would develop "naturally," in an uncorrupted way, and this, wrote Beasley, would lead to "normal, sensible relations between the sexes" rather than the relative segregation that prevailed (Beasley 1992: 285–87). Yet to most Sudanese, chaotic relations between the sexes would result if customary cutting were to stop; objection to the law as unwarranted interference was rife.[34]

For the colonial campaign against the pharaonic procedure to have succeeded *on its own terms* would have required no less than a sweeping transformation of local gender logics, domestic relations, and embodied personhood, ultimately perhaps the creation of bounded subjects, the sovereign units of British imperial rule so deftly captured in the zar. Biopolitical interventions had highly uneven effects in colonial Sudan and produced some fateful misapprehensions in part because they were tacitly based on a deep-seated individualism that, however commonsensical to Europeans, was not so to northern Sudanese. Sudanese women at once contained and accommodated colonial knowledge and used it to their own ends. However transformative the colonial experience may have been for the colonized, its bodily effects were complex and participatory, continuously shaped through a series of messy collisions between British and Sudanese heartfelt convictions and implicit ideals. It did not end pharaonic circumcision, yet contributed to its evolving significances, methods and forms.

## NOTES

1 The data and much of the argument here are distilled from a longer and more complex treatment, *Civilizing Women: British Crusades in Colonial Sudan*, Princeton University Press, 2007. I am grateful to the following for their research support: Social Sciences and

Humanities Council of Canada (1990–91; 1996–2000), Connaught Fund, University of Toronto (1994), H. F. Guggenheim Foundation (1998–99), Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Program (2003), the University of British Columbia (2004–06), and archivists in Sudan and throughout the UK but especially Jane Hogan of the Sudan Archive, Durham University. I remain most deeply indebted to women from the Kabushiya and Gedo regions of northern Sudan for our continuing conversations.

2 Collins 1983; Martin Parr to *The British Weekly*, November 29, 1963. SAD (Sudan Archive, Durham University, UK) 722/2/14.

3 MacMichael (1954: 73) referred to a decline "during the Dervish régime from over 8,500,00 to less than 2,000,000" at its end, based on estimates of the number of villages destroyed, towns abandoned when the British advanced up the Nile. Thesiger (1987: 182) suggests the population had fallen by half during the Mahdiya.

4 Sikainga 1996: 66–67, quoting Labour Bureau Annual Report, 1909, NRO (National Record Office, Khartoum) Intel 4/3/15 and Sudan Reports 1908: 558. See Boddy 2007, Ch. 6. The term 'Fallata' has pejorative connotations; they call themselves *Takari* or *Takarin*, referring to 11th-century Fulani origins in Takrur, Senegal.

5 M. Wolff to British Social Hygiene Council, Feb. 1933. SAD 582/10/16.

6 Crowfoot Papers, courtesy John Crowfoot and family, visited May 2010. In 1921 the government also opened the Girls Training College (GTS) in Omdurman to educate young unmarried native women as elementary school teachers.

7 M. Wolff to the British Hygiene Council, Feb. 1933. SAD 582/10/12.

8 SAD 581/5/13.

9 Atkey to Bardsley and MacMichael, March 1, 1924. NRO CIVSEC 1/44/2/12, p. 11.

10 Willis to DCs, February 19, 1924, NRO CIVSEC 1/44/2/12, p. 8.

11 I am drawing principally from my own ethnographic research in Sudan conducted since 1976. See especially Boddy 1989, 1997, 2007.

12 "Elementary Practical Lessons for Midwives of the Sudan," n.d., SAD 581/5/5.

13 M. E. Wolff, Speech to the Committee of the Guild of Service, 1922. SAD 579/3/29.

14 "Elementary Practical Lessons for Midwives of the Sudan," SAD 581/5/8.

15 "Elementary Practical Lessons for Midwives of the Sudan," p. 16.

16 "Learning to scrub up", SAD 583/5/38.

17 Wolff to Director, SMS, 8 April, 1934. SAD 582/4/26.

18 MTS Annual Report, 1932. SAD 581/1/46.

19 Originally founded to educate the daughters of Egyptian and other foreign personnel in Khartoum and expected to offer secular teaching unless parents agreed to let their daughters attend Bible lessons. See Boddy 2007: 55–59.

20 "Midwives Inspection Tour Report for 1928." SAD 582/1/51.

21 Gillan to Secretary for Health, Education, etc., February 3, 1930. NRO CIVSEC 1/44/2/12, pp. 19–22.

22 C. Huddleston to Matthew, July 14, 1930. NRO CIVSEC 1/44/2/12/62; Matthew to MacMichael, July 15, 1930. NRO CIVSEC 1/44/2/12/63.

23 "Dr. Shiels' interview with Mr. Kenyatta," January 23, 1930. CO (Colonial Office files, Public Record Office, London) 533/384/9.

24 *The Times*, February 18, 1930. NRO CIVSEC 1/44/2/12/29a.

25 On the All-Parliamentary Committee and its work, see Boddy 2007. On the Kenya controversy see also Pedersen 1991, Thomas 2003, Murray 1974.

26 SMS reports for 1927, 1930, 1932, 1935. RH (Bodleian Library of Commonwealth and Africa Studies at Rhodes House, Oxford) Mss Perham 558/1.

27 "Historical Survey of the Development of the Sudan Medical Service" SMS 1937. RH Mss Perham 558/3/166–174.

28 Hills-Young, "Female Circumcision in the Sudan," November 1944. SAD 631/3/36–37. M.E. Wolff to Dickens February 12, 1946. SAD 581/4/18. See also Sanderson 1981: 79.

29 M.E. Wolff to Dickens February 12, 1946. SAD 581/4/18.

30 Hills-Young, "Care of the child in the Sudan," Address to the Nurses League, November 4, 1944. SAD 631/3/34.
31 Hills-Young, "Care of the child in the Sudan," Address to the Nurses League, November 4, 1944. SAD 631/3/34.
32 Hills-Young, "Care of the child in the Sudan," Address to the Nurses League, November 4, 1944. SAD 631/3/47.
33 Local Vernacular Press Summary: "Untimely Circumcision," *El-Sudan El-Gedid,* June 8, 1945. RH Mss Perham 575/3; NRO CIVSEC Intelligence Report No. 87, June 8, 1945. RH Mss Perham 571/1/18–19; Beasley to Robertson, August 16, 1945.SAD 657/4/51; "Translation of a speech given by Sitt Nafissa to the mothers of Omdurman," March 7 1946. SAD 657/4/107.
34 Most serious was the eruption of rioting in Rufa'a when a midwife was arrested for performing an unlawful circumcision. See Boddy 2007, Chapter 11.

## REFERENCES

Arnold, David, 1993 Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth-Century India. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Beasley, Ina, 1992 Before the Wind Changed: People, Places and Education in the Sudan. Janet Starkey ed. Oxford: British Academy/Oxford University Press.

Bell, Heather, 1998 Midwifery Training and Female Circumcision in the Inter-War Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. Journal of African History 39: 293–312.

Bell, Heather, 1999 Frontiers of Medicine in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1899–1940. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Bjorkelo, Anders, 2003 [1989] Prelude to the Mahdiyya: Peasants and Traders in the Shendi Region, 1821–1885. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boddy, Janice, 1989 Wombs and Alien Spirits: Women, Men and the Zar Cult in Northern Sudan. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Boddy, Janice, 1997 Womb as Oasis: The Symbolic Context of Pharaonic Circumcision in Rural Northern Sudan. *In* The Gender/Sexuality Reader: Culture, History, Political Economy. R. N. Lancaster and M. di Leonardo, eds. pp. 309–324. New York: Routledge.

Boddy, Janice, 2002 Tacit Containment: Social Value, Embodiment, and Gender Practice in Northern Sudan. *In* Religion and Sexuality in Cross-Cultural Perspective. Stephen J. Ellingston and M. Christian Green, eds. pp. 187–221. New York: Routledge.

Boddy, Janice, 2007 Civilizing Women: British Crusades in Colonial Sudan. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Bush, Barbara, 2007 Gender and Empire: The Twentieth Century. *In* Gender and Empire. P. Levine, ed. pp. 77–111. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Collins, Robert O. and Francis M. Deng, eds., 1984 The British in the Sudan, 1898–1956: The Sweetness and the Sorrow. London: Macmillan.

Collins, Robert O., 1983 Shadows in the Grass: Britain in the Southern Sudan, 1918–1956. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Comaroff, Jean, 1985 Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance: The Culture and History of a South African People. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Comaroff, Jean and John Comaroff, 1991 Of Revelation and Revolution, vol. 1. Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Comaroff, John and Jean Comaroff, 1992 Ethnography and the Historical Imagination. Boulder: Westview Press.

Comaroff, John and Jean Comaroff, 1997 Of Revelation and Revolution, vol. 2. The Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Constantinides, Pamela, 1972 Sickness and the Spirits: A Study of the "Zar" Spirit Possession Cult in the Northern Sudan. Ph.D. dissertation, University of London.

Csordas, Thomas, 1999 Embodiment and Cultural Phenomenology. *In* Perspectives on Embodiment: The Intersections of Nature and Culture. G. Weiss and H. F. Haber, eds. pp. 143–162. New York: Routledge.

Daly, M. W., 1986 Empire on the Nile: The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan 1898–1934. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Deng, Francis M. and M. W. Daly, eds., 1989 Bonds of Silk: The Human Factor in the British Administration of the Sudan. E. Lansing: Michigan State University Press.

Fabian, Johannes, 1983 Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object. New York: Columbia University Press.

Foucault, Michel, 1990 The History of Sexuality, vol.1. An Introduction. Robert Hurley, trans. New York: Vintage.

Gilman, Sander, 1985 Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race and Madness. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Hargey, Taj M., 1981 The Suppression of Slavery in the Sudan, 1898–1939. D. Phil. Dissertation, St Anthony's College, Oxford University.

Holt, P. M. and M. Daly, 1979 The History of the Sudan. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson.

Holt, P. M., 1966 Egypt and the Fertile Crescent 1516–1922: A Political History. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Holt, P. M., 1970 The Mahdist State in the Sudan, 1881–1898. Oxford: Clarendon.

Holy, Ladislav, 1991 Religion and Custom in a Muslim Society: The Berti of Sudan. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hunt, Nancy Rose, 1999 A Colonial Lexicon: Of Birth Ritual, Medicalization and Mobility in the Congo. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Kenyatta, Jomo, 1961 [1938] Facing Mount Kenya: The Tribal Life of the Gikuyu. London: Mercury.

Keun, Odette, 1930 A Foreigner Looks at the British Sudan. London: Faber and Faber.

Levine, Phillippa, ed., 2004 Gender and Empire. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

MacMichael, Harold A., 1954 The Sudan. London: Ernest Benn.

McClintock, Anne, 1995 Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest. New York: Routledge.

Morgan, Jennifer L., 2005 Male Travelers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology, 1500–1700. *In* Bodies in Contact. T. Ballantyne and A. Burton, eds. pp. 54–66. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Murray, Jocelyn, 1974 The Kikuyu Female Circumcision Controversy, with Special Reference to the Church Missionary Society's "Sphere of Influence." Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles.

Pedersen, Susan, 1991 National Bodies, Unspeakable Acts: The Sexual Politics of Colonial Policy-Making. Journal of Modern History 63(Dec.): 647–680.

Pedersen, Susan, 2001 The Maternalist Moment in British Colonial Policy. Past and Present CLXXI: 161–203.

Piot, Charles, 1999 Remotely Global: Village Modernity in West Africa. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Salih, Tayeb, 1981 [1969] Season of Migration to the North. Denys Johnson-Davies, trans. London: Heinemann.

Sanderson, L. Passmore, 1981 Against the Mutilation of Women: The Struggle against Unnecessary Suffering. London: Ithaca.

Sikainga, Ahmad A., 1996 Slaves into Workers: Emancipation and Labor in Colonial Sudan. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Snively, Judith, 1994 Female Bodies, Male Politics: Women and the Female Circumcision Controversy in Kenyan Colonial Discourse. MA Thesis, McGill University.

Spaulding, Jay, 1985 The Heroic Age in Sinnar. East Lansing: African Studies Center, Michigan State University.

Spaulding, Jay, 1988 The Business of Slavery in the Central Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1910–1930. African Economic History 17(1): 23–44.

Stoler, Ann, 1996 Race and the Education of Desire. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Stoler, Ann, 2002 Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Thesiger, Wilfred, 1987 The Life of My Choice. London: Collins.

Thomas, Lynn M., 2003 The Politics of the Womb: Women, Reproduction and the State in Kenya. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Tierney, Thomas O., 1999 The Preservation and Ownership of the Body. *In* Perspectives on Embodiment: The Intersections of Nature and Culture. G. Weiss and H. F. Haber, eds. pp. 233–261. New York: Routledge.

Turner, Terence, 1994 Bodies and Anti-Bodies: Flesh and Fetish in Contemporary Social Theory. *In* Embodiment and Experience. T. Csordas, ed. pp. 27–47. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Warburg, Gabriel, 1978 Slavery and Labour in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. African and Asian Studies 12: 221–245.

Woodward, Peter, 1990 Sudan, 1898–1989: The Unstable State. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

CHAPTER 8

# CULTURAL PHENOMENOLOGY

## *Embodiment: Agency, Sexual Difference, and Illness*

*Thomas Csordas*

The phrase 'cultural phenomenology of embodiment' denotes an attempt to gain purchase on the understanding of culture and self from the starting point of our bodies as being-in-the-world, and requires recognition that our bodies are at once the wellspring of existence and the site of experience. In effect, embodiment is our fundamental existential condition, our corporeality or bodiliness in relation to the world and other people. For research in the human sciences, embodiment is "an indeterminate methodological field defined by perceptual experience and mode of presence and engagement in the world" (Csordas 1994: 12). I want to elaborate this definition further, first by noting that it emphasizes the contrast between embodiment as an "indeterminate methodological field" and the body as a "discrete organic entity." It explicitly paraphrases the definition proposed by Roland Barthes (1986: 57–8) of the text or textuality as an "indeterminate methodological field caught up in a discourse and experienced as activity and production" in contrast to the work (book) as a material object that occupies space. In this sense, books can be stacked tightly together on shelves and bodies can be packed in a subway car, but texts can interact with one another in endlessly proliferating ways, and embodiment is a matter of shared, mutually implicating, and never completely anonymous flesh.

Following this line of thought, in the following three sections I present an outline of body–world relations, sexual difference, and components of corporeality that establish,

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

as it were, the dimensions – length, breadth, and depth – of embodiment. In the final section I fill in this outline with a discussion of three illnesses that illustrate features of embodiment.

## Elementary Structures of Agency

For years in my seminar on embodiment I have begun by juxtaposing the work of Merleau-Ponty, Bourdieu, and Foucault, based on the intuition that the work of these three thinkers taken together established the intellectual topology of embodiment as an "indeterminate methodological field." To make that intuition explicit I want to show that their work outlines the structure of this methodological field by defining complementary aspects of the relation of our bodies to the world, specifically with respect to how they deal with the issue of agency. In brief, my argument is that the operative locus of agency is for Merleau-Ponty at the level of existence, for Bourdieu at the level of the habitus, and for Foucault at the level of power relations. The modality in which agency is exercised is for Merleau-Ponty intention, for Bourdieu practice, and for Foucault discourse. The vector of agency (for it has a directionality) is for Merleau-Ponty from our bodies to the world, in the sense of projecting into and orienting to the world. For Bourdieu the vector is a double one, pointing in opposite and reciprocal directions between our bodies and the world that we inhabit and that inhabits us. For Foucault the vector is from the world toward our bodies in the sense of inscribing itself upon or incorporating itself into us (Figure 8.1). Our interest is not to rehearse these well-known concepts from each of the thinkers or to examine how these concepts are developed by each theorist, but to place them in relation to one another in order within a matrix that defines a methodological field. Finally, if it sounds odd to attribute agency to the world rather than to individual actors, for now note that our world is a human world filled with others and with phenomena of our own making.

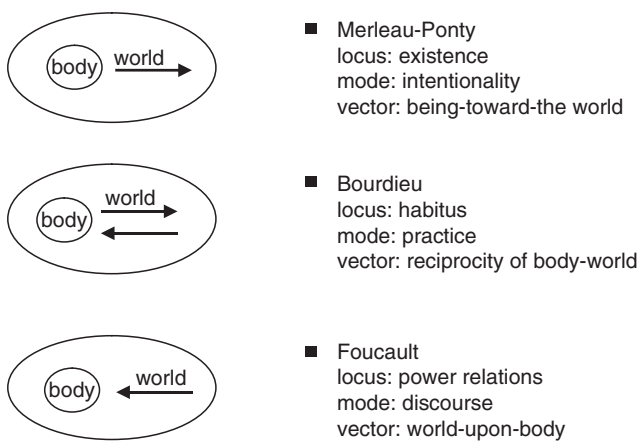



Figure 8.1 Elementary structures of agency in the relation between body and world.

## Merleau-Ponty: Body as Being-toward-the-world

The sense of intentionality that characterizes our bodily relation to the world is not that of the purpose of an act or the intended meaning of an utterance. Merleau-Ponty points out that Husserl referred to a "teleology of consciousness ... recognizing consciousness itself as a project of the world, meant for a world which it neither embraces nor possesses, but towards which it is perpetually directed." He invokes Husserl's distinction between the intentionality of act "which is that of our judgments and of those occasions when we voluntarily take up a position," and an operative intentionality "which produces the natural and antepredicative unity of the world and of our life, being apparent in our desires, our evaluation and in the landscape we see, more clearly than in objective knowledge, and furnishing the text which our knowledge tries to translate into precise language" (Merleau-Ponty 1962: xviii). It is the latter kind of intentionality that emanates from bodily existence; we could equally refer to this teleology of consciousness as a kind of sentient tropism, a tending toward the world.

This sentient tropism is tightly bound up with the unity of our body, or bodily synthesis. This means that under normal circumstances we do not experience our bodies or parts of them as *things*: "If my arm is resting on the table I should never think of saying that it is *beside* the ash-tray in the way in which the ash-tray is beside the telephone" (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 98). Contrary to objective or external space, in bodily space the parts of one's body are not spread out side by side but enveloped in one another. Merleau-Ponty gives a vivid example of this: "If I stand in front of my desk and lean on it with both hands, only my hands are stressed and the whole of my body trails behind them like the tail of a comet. It is not that I am unaware of the whereabouts of my shoulders or back, but these are simply swallowed up in the position of my hands, and my whole posture can be read so to speak in the pressure they exert on the table" (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 100). In my seminar on embodiment, we repeat this exercise, literally to get a feel for what Merleau-Ponty is writing about. In this context he observes that the concept of body image has evolved from referring to an association or compendium of bodily experience built up by association, to a "total awareness of my posture in the intersensory world, a 'form' in the sense used by Gestalt psychology" (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 100). Beyond this, "In the last analysis, if my body can be a 'form' and if there can be, in front of it, important figures against indifferent backgrounds, this occurs in virtue of its being polarized by its tasks, of its *existence towards* them, of its collecting together of itself in its pursuit of its aims; the body image is finally a way of stating that my body is in-the-world" (Merleau-Ponty1962: 101).

Note the recurrence of the term "posture" in the discussion of body image and bodily synthesis. Posture in this context is more primordial than its literal meaning of physical stance or its metaphorical meaning of moral stance. It is to be taken in the sense of the observation that the only word to describe a being without posture is "dead." Posture as the sign of bodily integrity goes hand in hand with intentional orientation toward the world. Two of the most compelling images Merleau-Ponty offers in this respect are those of the "intentional threads" that link us to the objects given in the performance of a task (1962: 106), and the "intentional arc" that subtends the life of consciousness, projects round about us our human situation, brings about the unity of our bodily capacities, and "goes limp" or "gives way" in illness (1962: 136, 157). Both phrases appear in the text in quotes that signal their metaphorical character,

but they emphasize the concrete, dynamic nature of bodily being, and in highlighting bodily being's simultaneous in-tension and intention.

The double horizon of an internal space of envelopment and a sending forth of intentional threads into the world outlines the classic difference between a thing-in-itself and a being-for-itself. But it points to another difference more significant for pinpointing the level of analysis of embodiment. In contrast to "bare life" identified by Agamben (1998) in reference to "the species and the individual as a simple living body" (1998: 3) at the level of biopolitics, it is what, in counterpoint to Agamben, I want to call "raw existence." Raw existence is energetic intentionality without yet being fully formed subjectivity, even less a developed capacity for reflectivity. What distinguishes bare life from raw existence is the presence or absence of the sentient tropism to which I have just referred. Our bodies-in-the-world are neither passive nor inert – they are not "just there." It is more accurate to say that we are bodies *toward* the world, bound to it by the web of intentional threads that issue from us. There is a "momentum of existence towards others, towards the future, towards the world..." (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 165). Merleau-Ponty suggests that "my body appears to me as an attitude directed towards a certain existing or possible task" (1962:100), such that unlike an object its spatiality is not one of position but of situation. This is why it is an advance to say that we inhabit the world, in the sense that we actively take up residence and make it our own. There is in this respect inevitably some degree of choice and freedom in existence.

## Bourdieu: Reciprocity of Body and World

The locus of agency in the relation between our bodies and our world shifts in Bourdieu to the habitus, and the mode of agency becomes practice. That the vector of agency is reciprocal is not to be taken in any temporal sense, as if in dialogue or call and response between body and world. It is structurally reciprocal in the sense, if I may say so, that the intentional threads are strung out in both directions. Although Bourdieu refers to practice as "the site of the dialectic of the *opus operatum* and the *modus operandi*" (1990: 52), this dialectic is not that of a temporal movement but a simultaneous co-production of social reality by world and body. In order to grasp this, "... one must situate oneself *within* 'real activity as such,' that is, in the practical relation to the world, the preoccupied, active presence in the world through which the world imposes its presence, with its urgencies, its things to be done and said, things made to be said, which directly govern words and deeds without ever unfolding as a spectacle" (1990: 52). The habitus is a matrix defined simultaneously by comfortable familiarity and anonymous determination, and practice is a compound term composed simultaneously of act and constraint, behavior and environment. This is why Bourdieu's prose is characterized by apparent oxymorons like "spontaneous dispositions," "intentionless invention," and "conductorless orchestration," tautologies like "structuring and structured structures," and what he himself calls paradoxes like the "information needed to avoid information" (1990: 61) and "objective meaning without subjective intention" (1990: 62).

The habitus appears as necessary and even natural insofar as it is "embodied history, internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history" (1990: 56). Actions constrained by objective conditions produce durable dispositions "in a sense

pre-adapted to" the demands of those conditions, such that "a virtue is made of necessity." Only those common-sense behaviors "possible within the limits of these regularities" are generated by the habitus, and "the most improbable practices are therefore excluded, as unthinkable" (1990: 54–5). Bourdieu's most compelling and accessible example is the witticism, which is effective not because it introduces the unthinkable but precisely because it dredges up the barely thinkable, in retrospect simultaneously both unpredictable and necessary, both original and inevitable. Thus it "presupposes a habitus that so perfectly possesses the objectively available means of expression that it is possessed by them, so much so that it asserts its freedom from them by realizing the rarest of possibilities that they necessarily imply" (1990: 57). Like the Chomskyan deep structure of a language, "Because the habitus is an infinite capacity for generating products – thoughts, perceptions, expressions and actions – whose limits are set by the historically and socially situated conditions of its production, the conditioned and conditional freedom it provides is as remote from creation of unpredictable novelty as it is from simple mechanical reproduction of the original conditioning" (1990: 55).

Bourdieu makes two significant statements about the relation between body and world in terms of practical sense and practical belief: "Practical sense is a quasi-bodily involvement in the world which presupposes no representation of either the body or of the world, still less of their relationship. It is an immanence in the world through which the world imposes its imminence, things to be done or said, which directly govern speech and action ... " (1990: 66). "Practical belief is not a 'state of mind,' still less a kind of arbitrary adherence to a set of instituted dogmas and doctrines ('beliefs'), but rather a state of the body ... It is because agents never know completely what they are doing that what they do has more sense than they know" (1990: 68–69). Sense and belief both are "beyond the reach of consciousness and explicit statement" (1990: 69), and Bourdieu expresses this in a string of phrases such as feel for the game, that which goes without saying, taken for granted, or social necessity turned into nature. Reminiscent of Merleau-Ponty, he invokes the notion of posture, though notably not for the purpose of distinguishing the living, intentional being from the non-living, but in its aspect of defining practical existence in the social field. He observes "the simple effect of re-placing the body in an overall posture which *recalls* the associated thoughts and feelings, in one of the inductive states of the body which, as actors know, give rise to states of mind" (1990: 69). In particular, "The opposition between male and female is realized in posture, in the gestures and movements of the body," and "most of the words that refer to bodily postures evoke virtues and states of mind" (1990: 70). From the time of childhood, practical mastery is transmitted through practice without rising to the level of discourse, through mimesis or mimeticism rather than by imitation, such that "Body hexis speaks directly to the motor function, in the form of a pattern of postures ... " (1990: 74).

Bourdieu also offers some clues as to how to construe practice in relation to intentionality and power, two other aspects of agency we are considering in the relation between body and world. Looking back toward our discussion of intentionality, here we find that because practices are "immediately adjusted" to structures, because there is a "harmonization of the agents' experiences and the constant reinforcement each of them receives from expression," and because of the "harmony between practical sense and objectified meaning," practices exhibit an objective intention "transcending

subjective intentions and conscious projects" (1990: 58). Lived intention is superfluous in both the production and deciphering of practices because they are automatic and impersonal. Looking forward to the discussion of power in Foucault, for Bourdieu power relations projected onto the future govern present dispositions. This is because "The relation to what is possible is a relation to power; and the sense of the probable future is constituted in the prolonged relationship with a world structured according to the categories of the possible (for us) and the impossible (for us)" (1990: 64). The habitus "adjusts itself to a probable future which it anticipates and helps to bring about," and is thus "founded on and therefore limited by power" (1990: 64–5).

## Foucault: World-upon-body

In the period immediately preceding his death, Foucault was concerned not only to specify that power is located in concrete relationships and to affirm the role of freedom, but also with morality, ethics, liberation, the self, and "how the subject constitutes itself in an active fashion through practices of the self" (Foucault 1997: 291). He claimed never to have rejected or denied the subject but only to have rejected the subject as an a priori analytical starting point as is done in phenomenology, "in order to analyze the relationships that may exist between the constitution of the subject or different forms of the subject and games of truth, practices of power, and so on" (1997: 290). This being said, by the time he made these qualifications and shifts in interest, the die had been cast through his studies of discursive formations that constituted madness, medicine, the human sciences, the penal system, sexuality, and biopolitics as fields of action of a diffuse power acting with a technological precision to inform bodies and subjects whose own agency and existence was arguably moot. To be precise, agency is for the most part reduced to resistance, and not resistance with a capital "R," as one might say "He was a member of the Resistance." Through most of his oeuvre Foucault's sense of resistance more often has the feel of the slowly moving slave, the mute peasant, the sullen proletarian, or the closeted homosexual. If this was not the tenor of Foucault's thought when he died, it was not only the way his work has largely been read but is his legacy in the way it has been taken up in subsequent scholarship.

For Foucault, the modality of agency is discourse, or, to be more precise, discursive formations, which are groups of statements systematically dispersed under conditions that permit the activation of incompatible themes or that conversely establish the same theme in different groups of statement. These conditions constitute rules of formation for objects of discourse, for types of statement (enunciative modalities), for thematic choices (strategies), and for concepts (1972: 38). Discursive practice – the exercise of power and the creation of truth and knowledge – "is a body of anonymous, historical rules, always determined in the time and space that have defined a given period, and for a given social, economic, geographical or linguistic area, the conditions of operation of the enunciative function" (Foucault 1972: 117). The directionality of the vector of agency between body and world is most literally evident with respect to discipline, which "reverses the course of the energy that might result from it [the body], and turns it into a relation of strict subjection" (Foucault 1977: 138). In Foucault the notion of posture appears once again – neither a touchstone of existence as with Merleau-Ponty nor a spontaneous disposition as with Bourdieu, but

an object of power. When the soldier of the late 18th century is made by discipline, as if out of a formless clay, "posture is gradually corrected; a calculated constraint runs slowly through each part of the body" (Foucault 1977: 135). When schoolchildren are taught good handwriting, "The teacher will place the pupils in the posture that they should maintain when writing, and will correct it either by sign or otherwise, when they change this position" (1977: 152).

Although it is correct to say that the vector of agency as power is from world to body, unlike Merleau-Ponty and Bourdieu, Foucault does not refer explicitly to the "world." He is interested more specifically in the discursive conditions of possibility for the emergence of specific institutional orders at specific historical periods, as for example it can be seen that the cumulative changes across multiple domains of a "microphysics of power" culminated in the conditions of possibility that allowed the transformation of the institutional penal system per se. However, these analyses contribute to a cumulative understanding of the relation between body and world in contemporary civilization insofar as they transcend institutional boundaries and seep into the world and society at large. Thus, since the 18th century "the disciplines became general formulas of domination" (1977: 137) and "discourses on sex did not multiply apart from or against power, but in the very space and as the means of its exercise" (1978: 32). Meanwhile, the analysis of governments as institutions is less at issue than a concern with governmental technology or governmentality (1997: 67–85) pertaining to "the broad sense of techniques and procedures for directing human behavior. Government of children, government of souls and consciences, government of a household, of a state, or of oneself" (1997: 81).

Part of why power appears diffuse is that through discourse it operates not only on individual subjects but on populations which, if not passive, are anonymous, and if composed of individual agents, seldom (unlike classes or ethnic groups) are conceived as endowed with collective agency. Another part of it is perhaps, as we have just noted, that the world is not theorized as such and hence is itself anonymous and ominous; with nowhere in particular to be it is a matter of course that power should be everywhere. Despite his late claims about power relations and the active self-constitution of subjects, the sense of power Foucault leaves us is with is a kind of coercive energy that surrounds us and in which we are immersed, occupying the interstices of social reality and penetrating the sinews of corporeal being much as "dark energy" permeates all of space for astrophysics.

## Sexual Difference

The foregoing discussion outlined a dimension of embodiment as an indeterminate methodological field defined by elementary structures of agency in the relation between body and world. Something equally elementary that we have not yet touched on is sexual difference. But should it not have come first? And is it not suspicious that so far we have discussed only three male theorists? Is there an ethico-theoretical danger of adding in the "female theorists" only after the groundwork is laid, as if pre-existing ribs were needed as a framework for "adding" sexual difference, as if there was an agenda of reproducing the mythology of first and second sexes? My position is that the structural issues we have been discussing pertain to both sexes and

to all genders, but that in defining embodiment as a methodological field sexual difference counts as an elementary structure in its own right, that gender both refracts and complicates the modes and vectors of agency, and that sexuality constitutes a substantive domain of empirical inquiry.

In fact, these issues are already present in the works of the three theorists we have been considering. Nevertheless, it is the female / feminist theorists who insist on sexual difference as part of the foreground of embodiment. In the seminar I mentioned earlier, we consider Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva, and Maxine Sheets-Johnstone. What these three thinkers share is not only an attention to women's experience that creates a vivid sense of what is missing in any analysis that make maleness or masculinity the default value, but also an appreciation of the fundamental importance of sexual difference per se. Just as use of the article instead of the pronoun instantiates an abstract entity called "the body" and obscures the immediacy of "my body," it also instantiates a singularity that obscures the fact that the body comes in two basic models whose existence is inevitably intertwined, their difference constituting an elementary structure of embodiment as a methodological field.

## Irigaray: Angels of Difference

The manner in which Luce Irigaray presents sexual difference is at once an ethico-political project for the present and a corporeo-ontological statement about human being. She suggests that sexual difference may be the major philosophical issue of our age (Irigaray 1993: 5). The polarity created by difference offers a way for both men and women to enter and exit the envelope of intimacy, and "for both, a possibility of unhindered movement, [and] of peaceful immobility without the risk of imprisonment" (1993: 12). The opposite of difference is sameness, or to be more precise sexual difference means recognizing two "differents" rather than a "same and other," where the same is masculine and the other is feminine. In the latter case a master–slave dialectic remains in place because man "fails to leave her [woman] a subjective life" and thus "[t]he maternal-feminine remains the *place separated from 'its' own place*, deprived of 'its' place" (1993: 10; emphasis in original). Sexual difference also means different subjects or subjectivities rather than a "subject and object" where the subject is male and the female is object. Irigaray sees an identity between same and subject – to date inevitably appropriated by the masculine in the form of theory, science, philosophy, and psychoanalysis – and between other and object as the non-place of the feminine. The consequences are profound: "Once imagine that woman imagines and the object loses its fixed, obsessional character" (Irigaray 1985: 133) ... "But what if the "object" started to speak? Which also means beginning to 'see.' What disaggregation of the subject would that entail?" (1985: 135). Such speech would institute the co-presence of "two syntaxes" that are "irreducible in their strangeness and eccentricity one to the other," and that would not require one "to speak of the 'other' in a language already systematized by / for the same" (1985: 139).

In addition to the theoretical argument Irigaray combines dramatic images and intense word-play, and an intentional "disconcerting of language" (1985: 142–3), techniques that emphasize the uniqueness of female being (her own included) while attempting to keep the focus on difference without regressing to otherness. These discursively destabilizing techniques in themselves, combined with the insistence that

desire is a changing dynamic whose outlines can never definitively be predicted, coincide with our emphasis on indeterminacy as a characteristic of embodiment and exempt her from the criticism that she is replacing a sexist master–slave dualism with a heterosexist masculine–feminine dualism.

To be precise, the difference between men and women is just as deep, primordial, and mutually constitutive as the difference between body and world. In this respect Irigary's vision coincides with what Sara Heinämaa has written of Simone de Beauvoir, who "did not take the man / woman division as just one aspect of human experience but saw it as the dominant distinction structuring our bodily sensations and feelings and also our highest spiritual achievements, philosophy included" (Heinämaa 2003: xiii). At the same time, sexual difference is also just as subject to indeterminacy as is the difference between body and world. While for biology the elementary structure of sexual difference is whether the organism is producing small gametes (sperm) or large gametes (egg) (Roughgarden 2009), for embodiment there is the indeterminacy of androgeny, the multiple genders of queer theory, Merleau-Ponty's (1962) sexuality as pervasive atmosphere and Foucault's (1984) sexuality as proliferating discourses, transsexualism, hermaphroditism, the prismatic desires of Freudian psychoanalysis and Deleuzian schizoanalysis.

## Kristeva: After the Virgin

Consolidating the reading of Irigaray by means of a vivid counterpoint, from the opening lines of Julia Kristeva's essay "Stabat Mater" one is reminded of the difference between saying that "difference" is a characteristic of women and that difference defines the relationship between men and women. The substantive cultural and historical case from which she theorizes is Christianity, which confines femininity within the "maternal" as epitomized in the image of the Virgin Mary, "one of the most potent imaginary constructs known to any civilization" (Kristeva 1986: 163). Kristeva shows the development of Mary as a highly condensed symbolic complex through three processes. The first was akin to a deification that rendered her analogous to her divine son in being free from sin and death, but also in being able to simultaneously occupy the roles of mother, daughter, and wife. A second process endowed her with attributes and paraphernalia of royalty as Queen of Heaven, and a third made her the prototype of the love relationship, in particular following the model of courtly love and love of the child. In the humanized figure of the Mater dolorosa and the serene Madonna characterized by the nonverbal signs of mourning tears and mother's milk, Kristeva gives special attention to the manner in which the "Virgin Mother occupies the vast territory on either side of the parenthesis of language" (1986: 174–75). This image coincides with Irigaray's notion of the silenced woman who is not a subject in her own right but occupies enormous symbolic space. For Kristeva the woman epitomized by the Virgin Mother is either hyperabstract or different (other), "[but] she will not be able to achieve her complexity as a divided, heterogeneous being" (1986: 173). She has no obvious sexuality or sexual organ but only an ear to hear, which, according to Kristeva, can lead to eroticization of hearing and the voice by substitution.

As with Irigaray, textual innovation is as instrumental to making the point as is the substantive argument. In the form of bold type insets, Kristeva interpolates lengthy passages that read sometimes like reflections from a journal and sometimes like prose

poems. They merge writing and love for a woman as "word flesh." They celebrate the joy and pain engendered in her by the tears and smile of her own newborn son (or does she write in the voice of the Virgin?) as what was her body is no longer her own. Kristeva evokes the smell of milk, the feel of the baby on her shoulder, fitful sleep and tender caresses, the abyss between mother and child, the hunger, the oblivion, the transport of the senses in sexual union. Her own mother, fragrant, soft, warm to the touch, then later quarreling, exasperation, hatred, all emblematic of a woman's relationship with other women, questioning what "women's discourse" would be. The maternal recognition of the arbitrariness of the other who is the child that eats away at the omnipotence of the symbolic. In this parallel text we are compelled to rejoin the immediate experiential level with Kristeva as woman / writer / mother. Alongside the paradox of mother or primary narcissism, beyond the symbolic elaboration of the virgin mother in history, Kristeva leaves us with motherhood in the form of what we identified earlier as raw existence, in all its immediacy and indeterminacy, its joy and anguish.

## Sheets-Johnstone: Dancing Embodiment

In juxtaposing the primacy of movement to Merleau-Ponty's (1964) emphasis on the primacy of perception, Maxine Sheets-Johnstone does not write *about* sexual difference but, I want to suggest, provides an example of the productivity of sexual difference when both sexes have voice. Specifically, Sheets-Johnstone is a woman trained as both philosopher and dancer. To the extent that in the culture which is home to both contemporary philosophy and to modern dance the latter field tends to be gendered as female, her approach to and emphasis on movement is de facto gendered just as Merleau-Ponty's approach is de facto gendered by his status as a non-dancing, pipe-smoking male.

Sheets-Johnstone begins with Husserl's concept of animate organism, in which the senses of both aliveness and self-movement are essential and intertwined. Animate organisms are "living, moving things that by their very animate nature are continuous in kind, there being no fundamental break between non-humans and humans" (Sheets-Johnstone 1999: 133). The term refers to "living beings whose animateness is the foundation of their perceptual world [and] underscores the originary significance of movement to creaturely life" (1999: 134). Her argument is that "animation is the originating ground of knowledge … the generative source of our primal sense of aliveness and of our primal capacity for sense-making" (1999: 132). In this respect it is critical that what is at issue in animation is not merely change in position, and least of all that our bodies can be passively moved by external forces, but the capacity for and experience of self-movement. Developmentally,

> primal movement precedes any cognition that "I move," which in turn precedes any sense of "I can." We do not try to move, but move from (and before) the moment of birth – we are not stillborn but from the outset kick, stretch, suck, and swallow. In these actions we discover our bodies before we control them, so that "movement forms the I that moves before the I that moves forms movement. Spontaneous movement is the constitutive source of agency, of subjecthood, of selfhood" (Sheets-Johnstone 1999: 138).

Sheets-Johnstone further observes that closely associated to the originary quality of movement itself are what developmental psychologist Daniel Stern refers to as vitality

affects, a category of feeling not well represented in our lexicon of emotion and affect. These feelings are best described by dynamic, kinetic terms such as surging, fading away, fleeting, explosive, crescendo, decrescendo, bursting, drawn out, etc. They are sensible to infants both from within and in the behavior of other persons, and never leave us as adults (1999: 157–158).

In elaborating her notion of kinesthetic consciousness, and reminiscent of Merleau-Ponty's example of leaning upon his desk and feeling the rest of his body trail behind, she offers the example of performing an overhead arm stretch. Unlike Merleau-Ponty she invites the reader to perform this movement (we do so in the embodiment seminar) and subsequently repeat the performance including free variation of the movement – not simply imaginative free variation as Husserl advocated for the phenomenological method, but actual kinesthetic variation. Invariant across these variations is an overall quality that allows each version to be grasped precisely as a variation, a "felt physiognomic aspect which is in fact a constellation of qualitative aspects" (1999: 142). The modulations of movement do not take place in space and time but in effect create them (e.g., how I move might create an expansive or a constricted space), and the expectations of the consequences of movement based on kinetic regularities (e.g. every time I raise my hand it takes the same amount of effort) is foundational to a sense of agency (1999: 145). Features of movement such as fleetness and determinateness have no kinetic "parts," such that in the streaming present of movement "kinetic quality is indivisible. It inheres in the unfolding movement pattern or dynamic as a whole" (1999: 152), harmonious in precisely this sense that a body moves as an integrated whole.

## Components of Corporeality

There is a sense in which corporeality is integral to every domain of existence, but if embodiment is to be useful as a methodological field it must (like textuality) have a definable scope. Embodiment is not the only standpoint from which to examine human existence, and not all questions can be answered by reference to embodiment. Once we have a more or less complete outline of embodiment as a methodological field we can look for the way it plays out in relation to, for example, different fields of social life such as religion, politics, economics, technology; or different fields of psychic activity such as cognition, motivation, imagination, creativity. With this in mind, alongside the elementary structures of agency and sexual difference we can propose, in a provisional and schematic format, a third dimension of embodiment that defines corporeality strictly speaking in terms of ten components:

1) *Bodily form* We have arms, legs, torso, head, upright posture; body schema and image are based on wholeness or integrity but bodies can be both diminished by amputation and loss of organs or capacities, and restored or enhanced by prosthesis.
2) *Sensory experience* We have certain senses defined in variable ways (five senses plus proprioception and temporality) with a certain range of possibilities for their use and development, and certain consequences for their loss or derangement.
3) *Movement or motility* Our ability to move is characterized by agency and intentionality, defined by style; it requires effort and encounters resistance.

4) *Orientation* We inhabit space, both natural / geographical and constructed / architectural, and even more fundamentally we create space by the manner in which we move in relation to objects and others.
5) *Capacity* We possess certain capabilities of execution and endurance and certain consequences in case of loss or loss of function of any of them, as well as for these capabilities to be enhanced or augmented by technique, tool use, technology, or drugs.
6) *Gender* This includes interaction among sex, sexuality, and gender; it includes specificity of gendered experience, as well as transgendered and intersexed forms of being. Its reappearance here is related to the larger dimension of sexual difference in a way similar to how a chapter in a book might bear the same title as the book.
7) *Metabolism/physiology* Specifically highlighting the processes of building up and destruction of protoplasm essential to life, and the chemical changes providing energy and assimilating new material, what is at issue is the experience of organic functions, changes, and modulations.
8) *Copresence* This includes historically and culturally modulated forms of intersubjectivity, intercorporeality, alterity, sociability, and somatic modes of attention, both in face-to-face context and increasingly in virtual settings created by technology.
9) *Affect* Culturally formulated and situationally specified as emotion and feeling, insofar as it is a component of embodiment it includes recognition of states and changes, intensities and fluctuations of agitation, arousal, excitation, passion.
10) *Temporality* Insofar as it is a component of embodiment, this is not a feature of linear chronology or sequence so much as experience of duration, aging, mortality, death, reincarnation, out of body experience, diurnal rhythms, and seasonal cycles.

Given these components of corporeality, are there certain kinds of data one looks for, or certain kinds of methods one brings to bear in a cultural phenomenology of embodiment? In one respect one can say the relevant data are those pertaining to any of the components we have just outlined, and the relevant methods are those of phenomenological and existential analysis as adapted for anthropological purposes, i.e. for purposes of understanding culture and self. In another respect I want to assert that the data we gather and the methods used to gather it – primarily still varieties of interviewing and participant observation for anthropologists – are fundamentally no different to those in any other style of anthropology, but that what differs is the methodological stance, the way we attend to those data, and the questions we ask of them.

To be somewhat more specific, Robert Merton has identified a relevant pattern of scientific practice that he calls "strategic research material" (SRM). He defines the SRM as "the empirical material that exhibits the phenomenon to be explained or interpreted to such advantage and in such accessible form that it enables the fruitful investigation of previously stubborn problems and the discovery of new problems for further inquiry" (Merton 1987: 10–11). We can identify several categories of Strategic Research Materials relevant to embodiment. Some of the most obvious are health, religion, technology, dance, space / place, violence, and sexuality. In the next section I examine three examples of strategic research material from the domain of health and illness, each of which highlights a particular elementary structure of agency in the

body–world relationship, articulates with sexual difference in a specific manner, and problematizes distinct components of corporeality. These prototypical disorders are phantom limb, chronic fatigue, and environmental illness.

## Three Instances of Illness

### Phantom Limb and Being-toward-the-world

That our bodily existence is an intentional for-itself being-toward-the-world is compellingly illustrated by the phantom limb phenomenon. Phantom sensations in a nonexistent limb are not accounted for by the persistence of memory or mental representation, nor by the spontaneous activation of the central or peripheral nervous systems. They are best understood as fundamental bodily intentionality in the form of what has been called "motor resonance" between our bodies and the world (Merleau-Ponty 1962; Wood and Stuart 2009). They are grounded in a body schema understood not as a representation but as a structure or "system of motor capacities, abilities, and habits that enable movement and the maintenance of posture and which function without the necessity of perceptual monitoring" (Wood and Stuart 2009: 493).

Movement, and more specifically a sense of agency, has become prominent in recent innovations in the treatment of phantom limb pain using virtual reality. This line of work began in the 1990s with the development of the "mirror-box" in which a patient places the intact hand and the hand stump in a cardboard box fitted with a vertical mirror to produce a reflection in the space that would be occupied by the phantom limb, and attempts to move the phantom and the intact hand in synchrony while visually focusing on the reflection. The majority of patients experienced some form of transferred kinesthetic sensation in the phantom, and patients experiencing involuntary clenching spasms in the phantom reported relief. A 60-year-old man with a post-injury left forearm amputation reported that he could not move his phantom because it was painfully clenched and grasping a massive, cold metal bar about 10 centimeters long. In mirror box therapy over several months the metal bar gradually disappeared and he was able to move the phantom smoothly and without pain, with measurable corresponding activity in residual stump muscles. At the first mirror session his frustrating attempts to move the wrist and the incongruity between the phantom grasping and the mirror image of an intact hand caused him to vomit (Kawashima and Mita 2009).

This therapeutic insight has been elaborated with the application of more advanced virtual reality techniques. One such technique creates an immersive virtual reality by including a head-mounted display along with a data glove worn on the intact hand, allowing representation of the whole body as well as unrestricted movement within the virtual environment (Cole 2008; Murray et al. 2010). Patients using these devices typically reported decreased pain during the session, though it often became temporarily more intense afterward. In one study, four of six patients gained a sense of agency accompanied by sensation including both movement and touch, and with increasing virtual agency and specificity of sensation in parts of the phantom, pain was reduced (though pressure still perceived), merging into the background of the movement sensation. Equally important to the understanding of embodiment, they observed a feeling of greater heaviness and effort required when intending to move

their phantom arm per se (i.e., inhabiting the virtual image), than when just moving the virtual limb by moving or wagging their stump. The task requires attention and effort, and is tiring, unlike the unimpeded motility of our intact bodies' being-toward the world. In contrast, the two subjects who acquired no sense of agency (though one of these experienced passive movement of the phantom), embodiment, or pain relief had not moved their arms for years prior to amputation, suggesting an eventual decay of intention (Cole 2008).

An experiment in which patients were asked to perform movements with their phantom in coordination with images of a limb moving on a screen showed that these imagined, illusory movements both help to restore activity in the motor cortex and reduce pain – unless the image moves faster than a patient can keep up with, in which case pain is exacerbated (Giraux and Sirigu 2003). It is the sensation of being able to move, and to a lesser extent of being moved, that alleviates or interrupts the pain.

To summarize, our bodily synthesis maintains and reasserts its integrity precisely insofar as it is a being-toward-the-world. To be more precise, recent work suggests that the phantom limb phenomenon is usefully understood just as much as being called forth by the world as being produced by the persistence of vital intentionality (Wood and Stuart 2009: 491). In this sense phantom limbs are not a residue or a memory but a continuation of being-toward-the world.

## Chronic Fatigue and the Impasse of Reciprocity

At the locus of habitus and in the modality of practice, our analysis becomes concerned with the world not only calling forth but acting upon, as the vector of agency from the world toward our bodies meets the vector of bodily being-toward-the-world. In Figure 8.1 this reciprocity is represented by two parallel arrows suggesting an unobstructed and relatively balanced exercise of agency between our bodies and the world. The existential locus of chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), I want to suggest, is precisely in the habitus, but in this case the two vectors meet one another head on, and instead of reciprocity there comes to be an impasse. In this impasse the afflicted person becomes bogged down in the practice of everyday life, increasingly exhausted by the resistance of the world, and eventually incapacitated.

An ethnography of chronic fatigue in the United States clearly demonstrates the impasse of agency in the body–world relation (Ware 1999). What we are describing as a vector of agency from one's body toward the world is characterized by sufferers as a lack of stamina, a feeling of being slowed down, and unpredictable fluctuations in symptoms and their severity. This impaired agency comes up against a vector of agency from the world toward one's body characterized by the demand for constant activity, speed or an accelerated pace of everyday life, and tight scheduling that extends to multiple domains of practical activity (Ware 1999). These cultural expectations in the United States are more precisely understood in terms of our argument as culturally defined qualities of practice inculcated as dispositions in the habitus. Unimpaired bodily agency is spontaneously orchestrated or coordinated in terms of these dispositions – there is effort required and resistance encountered, but they are as if one is swimming with a current. In chronic fatigue syndrome, however, it is as if one is swimming upstream, with "a sensation of heaviness or being weighted down (what someone dubbed 'lead legs'); a 'drained' feeling, as in a severe case of the flu; a sense

of being groggy or 'drugged'; a feeling of weakness … [and] 'payback' – the exacerbation of symptoms following (over)exertion" (Ware 1999: 307–308).

Understanding CFS from the standpoint of practice theory requires recognition that dispositions within the habitus for level of activity and exertion will vary across cultures, and that this will lead to observable differences in illness experience. In an international multicenter study across four sites in the U.S., three in the U.K., and one in Australia, participants fell into one of two classes, the first with greater reports of multiple somatic symptoms, depression and anxiety, and subjective nodal pain and swelling. Cross-culturally, there were substantially higher proportions of class one participants in the three U.K. sites, but the study authors do not attempt to account for this difference, commenting only that overall the research samples are heterogeneous and that the sites did not generate comparable patient groups (Wilson et al. 2001). Also relevant to our argument, "In Japan, there are many 'workaholics,' i.e., people who work more than 260h per month, and it has been suggested that these people fall into the high-risk group for sudden death or 'Karoushi,' due to overwork" (Kuratsune and Watanabe 2008: 81). Corresponding to a habitus that incorporates dispositions to this level of work intensity, studies in two Japanese metropolitan areas found that 35–40 percent of people reported chronic fatigue lasting more than six months, though only a small fraction met the CDC diagnostic criteria for the syndrome (Kuratsune and Watanabe 2008: 68).

What is of anthropological interest in this example is not simply the high rate of sub-clinical chronic fatigue in Japan, but also the social construction of this epidemiological fact by means of researchers' concern to identify and treat this category and degree of distress. This observation suggests that

1) the reciprocity of the body–world relation allows for a continuum of experience between normal and pathological fatigue, and
2) that fatigue can be culturally recognized, problematized, and elaborated at various points along this continuum.

## Environmental Illness and the Materiality of Power

Environmental illness (EI) or multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) is a reaction to the man-made environment of low-level ambient chemicals in general, as if one were allergic to the world at large, rendered sick by the totality of material civilization. In this respect the locus of the body–world relationship is a power relation, and vector of agency is predominantly oriented from the world toward the exposed and vulnerable body. Sufferers describe a variety of complaints across all bodily systems, though "the neurological, respiratory, and gastrointestinal systems are commonly affected" (Lipson 2004: 201). In an ethnographic study, one individual said "The symptoms are from head to toe, my heart palpitations were going like crazy, and my knees had turned in, my tendons were just pulling all the time… and muscle cramps and groggy head"; another reported "I had reading problems, memory problems really bad. I described it like a record running on the wrong speed. I had foot drop, I was shuffling like a person with Parkinson's. And the neurological stuff was very obvious…" (Lipson 2004: 208).

We can understand this syndrome in terms of the vector of agency from the world to one's body in three senses:

1) At the level of immediate bodily experience, those afflicted with MCS are literally uncomfortable in their own skin because they have developed an intolerance to virtually any man-made chemical, and they are unavoidably immersed in a milieu of such chemicals simply by virtue of living in contemporary society. From the standpoint of embodiment, the illness epitomizes the oppressive ubiquity of Foucauldian biopolitics. The logic of illness etiology and pathophysiology is predicated on the discourse of the penetration of capitalist industrial power into the pores and sinews of us all. In effect, it adds a dimension of materiality to that discourse, complementing the rhetoric of words with the language of complex synthetic molecules and achieving the material instantiation of pervasively toxic power in the interstices of everyday life.
2) In addition to the way the discursive biochemical component of power is understood to act on the body of those afflicted with MCS, the biomedical component of power simultaneously delegitimizes and denies the existence of the illness. Researchers observe that "the alleged chemical burden in the chemically sensitive body is not evidenced in pathological test results" (Phillips 2010: 183) and that "objective physical findings and consistent laboratory abnormalities are typically nonexistent" (Labarge and McCaffrey 2000: 183). Supportive health care practitioners therefore rely on their judgment of narrative credibility rather than objective test results (Phillips 2010: 187), and sufferers develop strategies of narrative emplotment to circumvent the discourse of delegitimization when dealing with non-supportive clinicians (Dumit 2006a: 585–587). It is through this narrative work that resistance in Foucault's sense, and bodily agency in our sense, are manifest. Clinical ecology practitioners rationalize their stance with a moral discourse of truth-seeking, altruism, and eschewal of financial gain, whereas skeptical practitioners who oppose them both in clinical practice and litigation for access to treatment or workmen's compensation "enact a more regulatory medicine that polices the social body in the Foucauldian vein" (Phillips 2010: 190–193).
3) In addition, biopolitics is engaged on multiple levels including litigation, contestation of scientific evidence, the environmental health movement and environmental politics, and efforts to lobby the government via (in the U.S.) the Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration (Kroll-Smith and Floyd 1997). An ecofeminist perspective links a critique of patriarchal social structures with "environmental mismanagement and its negative consequences to health" in a way that emphasizes both the particular vulnerability of women and the particular possibilities for empowerment and resistance in an alliance between the feminist and environmental health movements (Chircop and Keddy 2003). The existence of the category of MCS itself constitutes "a nascent theory of bodies and environments" that some see as a move toward the democratization of medical knowledge and epidemiology (Brown 2007; Kroll-Smith and Floyd 1997). Thus the body–world relationship is engaged at the locus of discourse that contests power not by the agency of the individual body, which is for the most part in retreat from and avoidance of the (chemical) effects of power, but by the agency of the collective body politic in the form of a health based social movement.

## Sexual Difference and Legitimacy: Integrity, Activity, Exposure

How do these conditions that map the three aspects of the body–world relationship correspond to our second dimension of embodiment as a methodological field, that of sexual difference? In fact, virtually all amputees experience some kind of phantom limb sensation, and about 80 percent of amputees experience phantom limb pain (Weiss 2008), with no reported difference by gender. For CFS, it has been reported that approximately 70 percent of people diagnosed are women (Friedberg 2010: 2; Moss-Morris and Perrie 2000; Wilson et al. 2001). On the other hand there have been studies that report equal sex differences among CFS patients and suggest that the gender bias is less marked than originally thought (Moss-Morris and Perrie 2000: 23). MCS is even more overtly labeled a "women's disease" with 70–80 percent of the afflicted being women (Lipson 2004: 209; Watanabe, Tonori and Aizawa 2003: 267). One literature review reported MCS study populations ranging from 68–88 percent female (Black 1996), with the typical profile being middle-aged (30–50) and well-educated (55 percent having completed at least four years of college (Labarge and McCaffrey 2000: 187).

The increase in the proportion of female to male sufferers across the three conditions might be taken as evidence that the existential playing field is increasingly less level with respect to sexual difference as one moves from the intentionality of existence, to practice within a habitus, to power articulated in discourse. Put another way, this observation points to the increasing vulnerability of agency in female embodiment across what we identified above as the components of corporeality. These would include components that constitute bodily integrity as epitomized by phantom limb syndrome (bodily form, sense experience, movement / motility, orientation), worldly activity as epitomized by chronic fatigue syndrome (movement / motility, capacity, affect, temporality), and exposure to environmental consequences of modernity as epitomized by multiple chemical sensitivities (sensory experience, copresence, affect, metabolism / physiology).

Perhaps even more compelling, the increase in the proportion of female to male sufferers corresponds exactly to the decrease in legitimacy granted to the condition in medical circles and popular awareness. Phantom limb syndrome is medically recognized and its existence is not in dispute. Chronic fatigue syndrome is recognized internationally and there are formal criteria for the condition articulated by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. However, negative views and skepticism of patients affects the social status of CFS from the outset in the arena of primary care, where physicians may perceive patients as having negative traits and as unwilling to disclose psychosocial components of their illness. It may be interpreted by doctors as an inappropriately medicalized life problem or the somatic presentation of mental illness, and they are likely to regard the condition as fluctuating, incurable, and very difficult to manage (Chew-Graham et al. 2010). Multiple chemical sensitivity has variable status in different countries: it is not medically recognized in Australia, can be the basis for disability claims in some U.S. jurisdictions, and is explicitly classified as a physiological condition in Austria and Germany (Phillips 2010: 184; Labarge and McCaffrey 2000: 184). There are no institutionally established medical criteria for the condition and no techniques for determining pathophysiology, with clinical ecologists who treat the illness being accused by mainstream medicine of basing their practice on "junk science."

From the standpoint of conventional medicine the difference in legitimacy between CFS and MCS appears more a matter of degree than kind, both illnesses falling within the category of multiple unexplained physical symptoms (MUPS). Both are embroiled in contestation and controversy regarding their cause, and for both it is difficult to obtain diagnosis, treatment, insurance (Brown 2007: 172–177; Dumit 2006a, b; Moss-Morris and Perrie 2000: 88–90; Showalter 1998). From the standpoint of embodiment, we have already seen that MCS is relatively more highly associated with women and relatively less legitimate. This difference is worth elaborating. Perhaps the qualitatively most vivid distinction is that whereas CFS is often glossed as neurasthenia or hysteria updated, MCS is as likely to be glossed as hypochondria or fabrication. Relatively, CFS is thus the more respectable "mind–body illness" (Friedberg 2010), while doubt is cast as to whether MCS is an illness at all. There is an equally vivid contrast between the partisan arguments in favor of their legitimacy, the case for CFS being biological in the form of any number of naturally occurring viruses which have infectious potential, the case for CFS being chemical in the form of any number of culturally created or man-made molecules of undetermined effect in low doses. Yet again, whereas in CFS stigma is frequently attached to patients, in MCS stigma is attached as well to health care professionals who support and treat such patients (Lipson 2004: 208; Phillips 2010).

Finally, sufferers from and advocates for both illnesses constitute overlapping social movements, but CFS patients are likely to be involved in support groups and relatively less likely than their MCS-afflicted counterparts to be activists for environmental health and ecofeminism. This helps to generate a counter-discourse unique to MCS that overtly attempts to account for higher incidence rates among women by identifying relevant components of female corporeality. Thus it has been argued that women rely more than men on external cues in defining symptoms and therefore may be more likely to consider environmental causes; women's immune systems may be more vulnerable than men's to chemical exposure, and they are more often exposed to cosmetic products and domestic chemicals in poorly ventilated houses as well as being increasingly exposed to workplace chemicals (Labarge and McCaffrey 2000: 187–188 Chircop and Keddy 2003).

## Conclusion

Our examination of phantom limb, chronic fatigue, and chemical sensitivity has allowed us to flesh in the outlines of embodiment as an indeterminate methodological field. As we have elaborated it, this three-dimensional field includes a system of elementary structures of agency in the body–world relation, the fundamental axis of sexual difference between male and female and the variations along that axis, and a set of components of corporeality from which we were able to identify and isolate these illnesses as "strategic research materials." Without claiming that this is the only framework from which to understand embodiment, this exercise has been aimed at formulating a coherent approach that is at once a way to examine embodiment per se and a way to examine features of culture and self from the standpoint of embodiment.

## REFERENCES

Agamben, Giorgio, 1998 Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Barthes, Roland, 1986 The Rustle of Language. New York: Hill and Wang.

Black, Donald, 1996 Psychiatric Perspective of Persons with "Environmental Illness." Clinical Reviews in Allergy and Immunology 14: 337–355.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1990 The Logic of Practice. Richard Nice, trans. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Brown, Phil, 2007 Toxic Exposures: Contested Illnesses and the Environmental Health Movement. New York: Columbia University Press.

Chew-Graham, Carolyn, Christopher Dowrick, Alison Wearden, Victoria Richardson, and Sarah Peters, 2010 Making the Diagnosis of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome / Myalgic Encephalitis. *In* Primary Care: A Qualitative Study. Theme Issue, BMC Family Practice 11: 16.

Chircop, Andrea and Barbara Keddy, 2003 Women Living with Environmental Illness. Health Care for Women International 24: 371–383.

Cole, Jonathan, 2008 Virtual and Augmented Reality, Phantom Experience, and Prosthetics. *In* Psychoprosthetics. Pamela Gallagher, Deirdre Desmond and Malcolm McLachlan, eds. pp. 141–153. London: Springer.

Csordas, Thomas J., ed., 1994 Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dumit, Joseph, 2006a Illnesses You Have to Fight to Get: Facts as Forces in Uncertain, Emergent Illnesses. Social Science and Medicine 62:3: 577–590.

Dumit, Joseph, 2006b "Come On People… We 'Are' The Aliens. We Seem To Be Suffering From Host–Planet Rejection Syndrome": Liminal Illnesses, Structural Damnation, and Social Creativity. In E.T. Culture: Anthropology in Outerspaces. Debborah Battaflia, ed. pp. 218–234. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Foucault, Michel, 1972 The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language. A.M. Sheridan Smith, trans. New York: Harper and Row.

Foucault, Michel, 1977 Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison. Alan Sheridan, trans. New York: Pantheon Books.

Foucault, Michel, 1978 The History of Sexuality, vol. 1. An Introduction. Robert Hurley, trans. New York: Vintage Books.

Foucault, Michel, 1997 Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth. Paul Rabinow, ed., Robert Hurley and others, trans. New York: The New Press.

Friedberg, Fred, 2010 Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Fibromyalgia, and Related Illnesses: A Clinical Model of Assessment and Intervention. Journal of Clinical Psychology 66: 1–25.

Giraux, P. and A. Sirigu, 2003 Illusory Movements of the Paralyzed Limb Restore Motor Cortex Activity. NeuroImage 20: S107–11.

Heinämaa, Sara, 2003 Toward a Phenomenology of Sexual Difference: Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, Beauvoir. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.

Irigaray, Luce, 1985 Speculum of the Other Woman. Gillian C. Gill, trans. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Irigaray, Luce, 1993 An Ethics of Sexual Difference. Gillian C. Gill, trans. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Kawashima, Noritaka and Tomoki Mita, 2009 Metal Bar Prevents Phantom Limb Motion: Case Study of an Amputation Patient Who Showed a Profound Change in the Awarenes of His Phantom Limb. Neurocase 15:6: 478–484.

Kristeva, Julia, 1986 Stabat Mater. *In* The Kristeva Reader. Toril Moi, ed. pp. 160–186. New York: Columbia University Press.

Kroll-Smith, Steve and H. Hugh Floyd, 1997 Bodies in Protest: Environmental Illness and the Struggle over Medical Knowledge. New York: New York University Press.

Kuratsune, Hirohiki and Yasuyoshi Watanabe, 2008 Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. *In* Fatigue Science for Human Health. Yasuyoshi Watanabe et al., eds. pp. 67–88. Springer Japan.

Labarge, Andrew S. and Robert J. McCaffrey, 2000 Multiple Chemical Sensitivity: A Review of the Theoretical and Research Literature. Neuropsychology Review 10:4: 183–211.

Lipson, Juliene G., 2004 Multiple Chemical Sensitivities: Stigma and Social Experiences. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 18:2: 200–213.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 1962 Phenomenology of Perception. Colin Smith, trans. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 1964 The Primacy of Perception. James Edie, ed.,William Cobb, trans. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Merton, Robert, 1987 Three Fragments from a Sociologist's Notebooks: Establishing the Phenomenon, Specified Ignorance and Strategic Research Materials. Annual Review of Sociology, 13: 1–28.

Moss-Morris, Rona and Keith J. Perrie, 2000 Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. London: Routledge.

Murray, Craig, Stephen Pettifer, Toby Howard, Emma Patchick, Fabrice Caillette and Joanne Murray, 2010 Virtual Solutions to Phantom Problems: Using Immersive Virtual Reality to Treat Phantom Limb Pain. In Amputation, Prosthesis Use and Phantom Limb Pain: An Interdisciplinary Perspective. Craig Murray, ed. Berlin: Springer.

Phillips, Tarryn, 2010 "I Never Wanted to be a Quack!" The Professional Deviance of Plaintiff Experts in Contested Illness Lawsuits: The Case of Multiple Chemical Sensitivities. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 24(2): 182–198.

Roughgarden, Joan, 2009 Evolution's Rainbow: Diversity, Gender, and Sexuality in Nature and People. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Sheets-Johnstone, Maxine, 1999 The Primacy of Movement. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing.

Showalter, Elaine, 1998 Hystories. New York: Columbia University Press.

Ware, Norma, 1999 Toward a Model of Social Course in Chronic Illness: The Example of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry 23: 303–331.

Watanabe, Mitsuyasu, Hideki Tonori and Yoshiharu Aizawa, 2003 Multiple Chemical Sensitivity and Idiopathic Environmental Intolerance (Parts One and Two) Environmental Health and Preventive Medicine 7: 264–282.

Weiss, Thomas, 2008 Phantom Sensations. *In* Human Haptic Perception: Basics and Applications. Martin Grunwald, ed. pp. 283–94. Basel: Birkhäuser.

Wilson, Andrew, Ian Hickie, Dusan Hadzi-Pavlovic, Denis Wakefield, Gordon Parker, Stephen Straus, Janet Dale, David McCluskey, Gynneth Hinds, Andrew Brickman, Don Goldenberg, Mark Demitrack, Tony Blakely, Simon Wessely, Michael Sharpe and Andrew Lloyd, 2001 What is Chronic Fatigue Syndrome? Heterogeneity within an International Multicentre Study. Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry 35: 520–527.

Wood, Rachel and Susan Stuart, 2009 Aplasic Phantoms and the Mirror Neurono System: An Enactive, Developmental Perspective. Phenomenology and Cognitive Science 8: 487–504.

CHAPTER 9

# DEAD BODIES
## *The Deadly Display of Mexican Border Politics*

*Rocío Magaña*

The United States–Mexico border has been characterized historically as a site of national vulnerability and physical danger. Not surprisingly, then, the declarations of U.S. Customs and Border Protection spokesman Lloyd Easterling in the early summer of 2010 that "the border is safer now than it's ever been" astounded northern and southern residents and observers of the boundary alike. The pronouncement intended to calm bi-national anxieties produced by the ratification and federal lawsuit against the controversial Arizona law SB1070, which criminalized the unauthorized presence of immigrants in the state and imposed immigration enforcement duties on local police. It is not often that safety, positively framed, is employed to characterize the region; the recurrent choices have been variants of "brokenness," "insecurity," and "threat." With well over 2,000 migrant deaths in southern Arizona alone in the preceding decade, and nearly 25,000 killings throughout Mexico in the last four of those years (resulting from a relentless battle over drug-trafficking corridors), Mr Easterling's enthusiastic remarks raised some questions and more than a few eyebrows. Amidst so much death and bloodshed, how could the U.S.–Mexico border be safer?

The measurements that provide the bases for statements like Mr Easterling's are interesting for the types of politics and social management they reveal. In this case, the assessment rested on the relation between the strengthening of the American policing apparatus and a drop in the number of reports of aggression directed at U.S. Border Patrol agents. From this perspective, the improved safety pertained only to the physical well-being of American policing forces, which is no small thing. After all, violence,

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

death and neglect – as captured by the specter of the dead in general and the fallen American officer in particular – have shaped public attitudes and state interventions throughout the boundary's history. Nevertheless, the selective social geography the pronouncement lays out elucidates how, in the politics of protection at work on this border, not all vulnerabilities or deaths count equally. The injured and the dead remain at the center of state activity on the border. The tense triangulation among transgressed territoriality, dead bodies, and state politics is the conundrum that drives this discussion. The objective of these pages is to show how, at the juridical and territorial margins of the state, the dead body paradoxically becomes a productive site for the performance of authority. Ethnographically, I focus on state intervention on the bodies of Mexican subjects who die in relation to this border's illicit flows – namely drug-trafficking and unauthorized migration. I show how the politics of death is rendered visible amidst the state's inability to effectively control both the intensifying violence and suffering intimately tied to unauthorized migration and drug-trafficking, and its ambivalent relation of simultaneous complicity with, dependency on, and condemnation of, these deaths. In this politics, the corpses that could otherwise index state failures to protect, police, and provide for its citizens are strategically mobilized to sustain state authority and promote social cohesion.

In this examination, I turn my attention almost exclusively to Mexican state actors working on both sides of the boundary. This is not meant to exonerate their American counterparts, who also have a complex set of practices surrounding the operationalization of border-related injuries and death to sustain enforcement policies. Rather, the ethnographic focus on Mexican interventions enables an analysis of the politics of intervention and display of border-related deaths that does not stop on either side of the boundary. This allows, instead, a regional look, in which the state's maneuvering of its jurisdictional and territorial margins is at the center, not the end, of its strategies. Another reason to focus on the Mexican state is that, too frequently, Mexico is seen as a passive party to border tragedies which, as I show here, is clearly not the case.

This discussion draws from ethnographic work on migrant deaths on the Arizona–Sonora border region, undertaken intermittently between 2002 and 2009, as well as informal conversations and exchanges with border residents and observers of the other major illicit border industry, organized crime. I sought the data on migrant deaths, actively for my doctoral work; I literally could not avoid the data on *narco-crímenes*. While I do not mean to imply that migrant and narco-deaths are equivalent, my goal is to draw attention to what they reveal about the roles the border and the (dead) body play in national politics and statecraft. I offer an ethnographic account of the handling of migrant bodies in Arizona and a reading of *narco-asesinatos* (drug-cartel killings) in the adjacent state of Sonora to show how the Mexican state productively asserts its authority over people and territory at places and moments where its failure to protect life would otherwise signal the limits of its power and governmental apparatus.

This discussion moves through three stages. First, I provide a brief conceptual sketch locating what I see as a Mexican border politics of death within contemporary scholarly debates. Second, I offer a reading of the handling of a narco-death crime scene through a contextualization of the dislocated corpse in Mexican history, politics, and sociality. Then, I discuss the repatriation process of migrant remains found on the northern side of the boundary to show the intricate efforts of the Mexican

state to cast itself as protective if not to its subjects' lives, then at least to their bodies. Each of these stages contributes to the idea that, on the U.S.–Mexico border, the dead body is one of the sites on which social, political, and spatial battles are currently fought.

## A Mexican Politics of Death

The intense physicality and sheer volume of the casualties registered along the U.S.–Mexico border makes them too tragic or horrific to ignore altogether, be they migrants dying of thirst, fatigue and environmental exposure or out-of-luck *narcos* killed at the hands of rival cartel assassins. Yet, the focus here is not in explaining or documenting how these deaths come about, but rather on the post-mortem interventions on these bodies and their effects. Like most social practices surrounding the dead, interventions on bodies post mortem affect the living. Anthropologists have long suggested the centrality of the body as a platform for the social. In his influential analysis of bodily customs among the Kayapo of Brazil, Terence Turner shows how "the surface of the body […] becomes the symbolic stage upon which the drama of socialization is enacted" (1980: 112). Following that, I want to suggest that such a performative quality of the body and its display is retained and even magnified upon death, and that interventions on the dead body can be directed at shaping the drama of socialization. This is particularly the case with deaths that seem unnecessary, unnatural or excessive and corpses that appear out of place. In other words, the semantic potency of the body as a symbolic stage on which the desirable or acceptable can be conveyed is precisely what makes interventions on the publically dislocated and displayed dead body sociopolitically productive.

As a growing body of scholarship has suggested, structural inequalities make the promise of physical integrity and protection far from political guarantees impartially extended to, and equally enjoyed by, all subjects and populations (Farmer 2003). Anthropological analyses with a biopolitical bent have shown that much of contemporary politics centers on the negotiation of physical exposure and bodily damage (Petryna 2002), neglect (Biehl 2005), and the exceptionally permissible, direct or indirect, killing of subjects whose death would otherwise be unconscionable (Butler 2004; Fassin 2007). Similarly, on the U.S.–Mexico border, the politics of protection, security and safety go hand-in-hand with the operationalization of risk, danger and physical exertion. I have suggested elsewhere (Magaña 2008) that where and when state actively fails to protect life or structurally endangers it, the constitution of political authority often rests on the operationalization of injury and the post-facto management of death. Migrant and narco-deaths are central to the Mexican state because, by taking place at its margins, they reveal its limits. In this sense, this analysis ethnographically echoes the assertion by Veena Das and Deborah Poole (2004) that the state is "the site on which biopolitics and thanatopolitics are instituted together… [and] that this relationship, which is at the heart of the modern state, is much more visible on the margins than at the center" (Das and Poole 2004: 25).

Before discussing the cases in detail, it is necessary to lay the contextual and conceptual framework for this discussion.

The management, representation, and the actual infliction of death have long been considered the cornerstone of state sovereignty. Two schools of thought that have shaped recent analyses on the subject are particularly relevant to this discussion. Michel Foucault's (2003) notion of biopower offers an analysis of sovereignty dually based on the "regulatory" power of states over populations and the "capillary" modes of disciplinary power that produce "docile bodies." Based on this form of biopolitics, which is aimed at disciplining bodies and improving populations, Foucault further suggests that sovereign power rest not just in taking life or letting live, but in "making live" and "letting die" (Foucault 2003: 241). On the other hand, Giorgio Agamben (1998) offers an analysis in which the basis for political sovereignty focuses on the power to end life, the capacity to kill with impunity.

Although there are hundreds of migrants who are "let" to die while crossing the border each year, and there is certainly much killing that goes unpunished in this region, the politics of death at the U.S.–Mexico border does not neatly match either biopolitical model.

Other scholars have contended with the political management of death in contexts for which biopolitical notions of power seem insufficient. Reflecting on the multiple South African afflictions, Achille Mbembe (2003) asserts "necropolitics and necropower … account for the various ways in which, in our contemporary world, weapons are deployed in the interest of maximum destruction of persons and the creation of death-worlds, new and unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of living dead" (Mbembe 2003: 40). My take on the Mexican politics of death is less severe; after all, and despite the anxiety and chaos that characterize the borderlands, the premise of a possible better life has been historically a driving force. As much as death tends to be dislocated into the public domain, this is not a death-world (not yet, anyway). This is a place where political life takes place *with* and *through* death.

Other approaches positively considered the critique on Agamben's turning of biopolitics into thanatopolitics to explore the extent to which death could mobilize political life. Employing a ritual-oriented approach, Allen Feldman (1991) explores how Irish political prisoners used hunger strike deaths – the ultimate political sacrifice – to transform the space of their segregation and the meaning of their imprisonment through the mastery of their bodies. Stepping away from looking at death as an agentive resource, I would like to hang on to this idea that in death, the observed body bears the possibility to resignify social, political and spatial relations.

The significance of the dead body on the U.S.–Mexico border is in its political "afterlife," so to speak. The articulation of Mexican sovereignty in relation to the border-related death of subjects is less centered on the how or why of death, than on the roles the dead body, its location and condition, make available for the state. As things stand in the country, the one thing that remains clear is that the state is progressively outmanned and outgunned by the various cartels that operate across its territory, and it does not hold a sovereign monopoly on life, death or violence. Not even the claim of the state's legitimacy over the use of violence goes unchallenged amidst complex layers of corruption that taint the system, from the lowest-ranking officers in the most remote police jurisdictions to the office of the federal executive. The all-too-frequent stories of morgues, hospitals and police stations raided by gangs to steal the bodies of their fallen comrades suggest that the state does not even hold

effective control over its dead, the knowledge their bodies may generate, or of how they are to be disposed. And what of the country's role in the decade-long deadly saga of its migrants across treacherous lands? The neglect that triggers this migration in the first place is complexly tied to the dependence on the remittances such migration generates. Put simply, there is no sovereign entity in Mexico with the power to determine effectively and proactively who lives and who dies, who can be killed without consequence, who can be made to live or let die. And yet, the management of the dead at the border allows us to see that there is nevertheless a connection between life, death and sovereignty at work here.

The public display of bodies and body parts along border cities, the violently written threats that accompany them, the apparently casual circulation of their images, the stories of migrants forever lost in the desert, the elaborate documentaries outlining the repatriation of remains – these are all recursive signs of contemporary battles for border control. In the face of the insecurity and uncertainty produced by the destructive power of the drug cartels and the physically taxing character of contemporary unauthorized migration, perhaps is it not surprising that the resulting dead bodies would be appropriated by the Mexican state in an effort to recast its image of authority. In this border politics of death, the constitution of the Mexican body politic, the production of authority and citizen protection pivots on the effective management and recasting of politically charged dead bodies. This can be observed through the technocratic techniques by which these bodies are made legible, reclaimed from the public sphere, and reinstitutionalized as objects of the state's performance. The recasting of bodies as evidence in criminal investigations and legal cases is an example of this. Such appropriation enables the transformation of uncertainty brought about by border violence and neglect and turns the deaths they produce into a political resource. Although interventions on the dead body may present the state as reactive at best, its seemingly improvised responses to these dislocated corpses draw their potency from a historically rich and complicated relationship that ties claims to territorial sovereignty and the formation of the Mexican body politic to the violent display of the dead. It is, in part, this historical narrative that makes the control of the public dislocation and display of dead bodies on the border so ripe with political possibility.

In the next section, I discuss how efforts to manage these bodies, their representation and their significance are mobilized to resignify the social, political and spatial relations that are so important for the Mexican state, particularly at the boundary with its northern neighbor. The cases I discuss present an array of efforts by Mexican authorities to make dead bodies work to support the state's claim to authority and territorial control in a context in which both have historically been challenged by the public recurrence of violent and unnecessary death. Put a different way, the dead body on the U.S.–Mexico border is and has been a site where state authority over people and space has been contested and defined.

## Heads, Headshots, and the Dead Body on Display, Past and Present

Early in my fieldwork in Arizona, I met a border beat reporter who kept a collage of border-related photographs – "trophy shots" – as the wallpaper for his computer

screen. Among the images of saguaros and contraband, the headshot of a youthful man with a contagious smile seemed particularly out of place. "That's Kris Eggle," the reporter shared, noticing my interest. The 28-year-old all-American park ranger was killed in 2002, a short distance from the border, in Arizona's Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. Eggle died in a confrontation with elements of the then-rising, regional cartel offshoot known as "Los Números," who brought a level of violence and terror previously unknown to the region. When I asked the reporter why he kept the ranger's photo, he first said it was a reminder of what happens when one is "at the wrong place, at the wrong time," but quickly reconsidered. "This [border] can always be the wrong place; it's all a matter of time." This section offers a quick look at those moments in which state efforts and failures to control the border become crystallized in the images of the dead.

Long before the stories of fallen law enforcement agents could contribute to the perception of this place as a site of lawlessness and mayhem, forever in need of more state control, the ravages of death already defined state interventions and defied its pronouncements. Around the very same region where Eggle died, scalping once posed a major challenge to Mexican authorities. After government officials instituted scalp bounties to deal with the "Indian problem," the practice was turned on Mexican settlers during the Apache and Comanche raids that defined the region for much of the 19th century. A silver lining to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, in which Mexico ceded half its territory to the U.S., was negotiating American policing of native tribes in Arizona and New Mexico.

By the turn of the 20th century, the U.S. intensified policing not to keep the Native Americans in, but to keep out incendiary Mexicans and insurgent Texans of Mexican descent who routinely crossed the border south to escape the reach of American law. As Alejandra Stern (2005) has shown, in the early 20th century, the land south of the boundary represented a source of menacing threats to American integrity in political, social, racial and pathogenic terms. The proliferation of stories of border violence in the American media contributed to the concerns. For instance, the September 29, 1915 *New York Times* story about the kidnapping and killing of 21-year-old Private Richard Johnson by border rebels, who "exhibited [his head on a pole] as a trophy on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande," helped intensify calls for tougher American policing. At that time, enforcement did not get much tougher than the Texas Rangers, who once deployed to the boundary actively contributed to the violence.

Unfortunately, the methodic killing and display of bodies and body parts is not just a matter of history in the affairs on this border. The spread of border-related "*notas rojas*" and "*chismes rojos*" – literally "red" or "bloody" news and hearsay – has been relentless and viral. One day's worth of email received while writing this essay stands out not because of the goriness and ruthlessness of the content, but because of the almost mundane and unremarkable tone with which events were reported and discussed. The first story of July 2, 2010 to arrive in my inbox added three bodies to the tally of corpses left hanging from bridges, an increasingly common sight in the cartel wars. The second narrates an attack at 4:00 in the morning in which 21 people were gunned down with heavy artillery outside of the town of Tubutama on the historic *Camino de las Misiones* – a bucolic, solitary desert road I used throughout my research to get to Altar, still an epicenter of unauthorized migration. A few hours later, *El Diario de Sonora* broke the third story to its readers with two simple sentences: "A couple of

severed heads were found at 5:30 this morning in Nogales hanging from the fence of the Rosario Cemetery with a narco-message. Initial inquiries indicate the heads are those of two men" (Barragán and González 2010, author's translation).

This last story merits particular attention not just because of the powerful abject quality of the scene, but because of the complex role severed heads have played in Mexican politics. More elaborate coverage on the events followed, but it is remarkable that on a day of intense online commentary and debate, this initial report merited only two comments. In the first one, someone clarifies the location of the cemetery. In the second, a user identified as "Arturo balderas" [sic] inquires casually in Spanish, "Hello. Does anybody have any photos from the scene?" The request is interesting for several reasons. Over the course of my research, I witnessed in awe how quickly organized crime developed a capillary presence throughout northern Sonora and how the promise of anonymity quickly turned online forums into active venues for the exchange of information, gossip, insults and the framing of rivals. The circulation and deconstruction of images is a strong component of such activity. I had a chance to witness a similar kind of engagement offline during my very first trip to the border in 2002. Every afternoon in a beauty parlor in Reynosa, smugglers, strippers, and other slightly deviant types would gather around the newspaper to dissect its images and stories for information that might reveal compromised locales, snitches, fallen bosses, and corrupt and corruptible officials. Years later, I would see law enforcement engage in similar activities, and partake in debates with reporters and editors over the ethics of publishing leaked images from questionable sources. Meanwhile, the growing ubiquity of photograph-taking gadgets, the possibility of viral and anonymous postings, and the escalation of violence throughout the border region have made the Internet a second stage where the dead can be displayed and made to work.

Images from scene at the cemetery were easy procured. Mexican police took the one shared by contacts in the field, which was also posted online. The photograph shows a sort of triptych display with a poster-size cardboard sign at the center flanked on either side by the head of a young man hanging upside down against a background of marigold colored cemetery walls. The night before, Erick Hanse, Urrea Cota and Gerardo González Moss had been forcibly picked up from their homes by a convoy of vehicles. As unwilling patrons, the heads completed the message of the hand-written insignia: "Man up. This will happen to you."

It may seem tempting to qualify this incident simply as part of an ongoing criminal campaign that exploits the dead body to terrorize the public, intimidate the ranks of competing syndicates, and undermine state forces, but the effects and messages are more complex. A look at the comments in online forums or personal communications with the author proves revealing. A self-identifying middle-class forum user, "Alejandra," shared a common lament: "It's a calamity that things in this country are falling out of control in this way. How far will we go?" A post by "No-Mas-Por-Favor" celebrated, "This is great news! Let them kill each other." Still the expressions of concern or disregard like these were in the minority among those inquiring about the scene's context, details and significance. For example, "Laura" asked, "Could someone tell me what the narco-message says?" ("*me podrian dezir qe dice en el narco menzaje*" [sic]). Sentimentality was also absent from the discussion at the Border-Reporter blog, where a "Mario" inquired, "Who are these dudes?" "Who put the signs up and who are they picking a fight with?" demanded another user. Someone

responded with quite a bit of information on how the incident fits within the cartel wars: "I understand that these dudes worked for the Beltran brothers, and that they most likely were dispatched by Gigo or Yankee, who controls the plaza and works for Mayo and El Chapo" (*"tengo entendido ke esos weyes son gente de los beltranes y lo mas probable eske se los aya chihuahuado el gigo o yankee ke es el ke tiene la plaza y trabaja pal mayo y el chapo"* [sic]). Somewhere else, "devil's advocate" added with sarcasm, "*Lo bueno ke se le esta ganado la lucha al narco*" [sic] ("It's a good thing we are winning this war against the drug mafias"). However, a closer look at the photographs circulated reveals that in this particular battle scene, the state had the last word.

I would like to bracket the obvious violence against these bodies to focus on their handling, not just their decapitation, but the multiple layers of their flippant display. Following Mary Douglas's (1985) analysis of taboo and pollution, it could be said that the dead body out of place actively defiles and upsets the social order. And yet, what this photograph captures is not disruption but reiteration. A closer reading of the photograph in tandem with narratives of severed heads in key episodes of Mexican history shows deadly displays not only as techniques of terror, but also as historical recurrent trope in the constitution of state authority, territorial sovereignty, and the binding of the national body politic.

A more complete description of the photograph of the scene I received is in its order. On the first plane, a member of Mexico's Federal Police stands stoically, observant and anonymous with his back to the camera, adhering to safety protocols employed in operations against organized crime. The agent towers above four civilian onlookers, whose attire and indigenous phenotype bring to mind the many migrants who come through Nogales on their way north. From the left margin of the photograph, the right arms of two men work efficiently together to take possession of one of the heads. One latex-gloved hand cradles the head steadily from its crown in a gesture evocative of clinical births; the other prepares to cut to the wire holding it to fence. It is not insignificant that in a scene marked by deliberate gore, the arms of forensic experts working with clean precision stand for the state, as if the promise of procedural order were the antidote to the violent insecurity of the criminal social geographies of this border. Through the intervention of these hands, the criminal triptych is to be undone; the state is to take possession of the remains, bringing the once-dislocated under its jurisdictional fold, and the cemetery fence is to go back to being a less-suggestive separation between the living and the dead. This is not just an image of dead bodies criminally and violently dislocated into public space, but rather a depiction of the state at work to assert its power over the uncertainty of lawlessness at its margins.

Just as important as the hands retrieving the heads is the labor of the invisible hands behind the camera and the anonymous sources that circulate these images electronically or feed them to the media. All border agencies have strict protocols barring the photographing and documenting of crime scenes for anything other than official, investigative purposes, but images are constantly leaked to the press, posted online, and circulated among friends. After a former forensic investigator had shown me pictures of migrant death cases he considered outstanding because the bodies had not been found simply lying under a tree or shrub, I asked him about the usage protocols of such images. "Only investigators are authorized to photograph, and all photographs constitute evidence," he responded quickly and authoritatively. "So if anyone is takes a photo, say, with their cell phone, that's evidence. And if they're caught with

it, well, that looks bad. It's incriminating." But when I pressed about photos we both had seen in extra-official contexts, he replied with a smirk, "Well, everyone likes trophy shots." Typically, "trophy shots" capture extraordinary events – a large drug bust, a particularly clever way to camouflage contraband, a peculiar crime scene, etc. Images are routinely sent to colleagues and peers partly as information, partly as bragging rights, partly for amusement and dismay. Moreover, the characterization of such images as "trophy shots" suggests narrative tropes of winners and losers, of hunters and kill. If the photograph taken at the cemetery could be considered a "trophy shot," the ultimate "hunter" would not be the perpetrating cartel, but the state. Far from an objective act of crime scene documentation, the strategic layout of these heads on display constitutes an active act of statecraft against the ravaging uncertainty produced by border violence.

By way of contextualizing the Mexican politics around the appropriation of the dead body on display, it is necessary to start at the beginning – at the begging for stories of severed heads for the author at least, at the beginning of the formation of Mexican subjects in the public school system, at the beginning of Mexico as a nation-state. Fortunately, they all coincide. Although I must recognize my grandmother, Dolores, for the unabashed delight with which she recounted folksy accounts of talking, glowing and tumbling heads, it was the state that first offered me haunting images of the beheaded.

Free textbooks, a constitutional right in Mexico, expose all school age children to a unified national historic narrative. I received my first Mexican history book in the third grade. Among the national origin stories it recounted, details of the struggle for independence were particularly striking. The start of the insurgency under the leadership of Miguel Hidalgo is marked with the storming the Alhóndiga de Granaditas, a public granary where colonial officials had taken refuge. A year after that battle, Hidalgo and a group of insurgent leaders fell. As a deterrent to further uprisings, the colonial government executed and beheaded Hidalgo and three of his companions – Ignacio Allende, Jose Mariano Jimenez and Juan Aldama – hanging their heads on each of the four corners of the granary. According to the textbook, the public display of the severed heads of the Mexican founding fathers lasted ten years. Once the war was won and the nation officially born, the newly independent government took down the heads, which are now buried under *El Angel de la Independencia*, the iconic Mexico City monument where Mexicans gather to celebrate national victories, from political elections to soccer tournaments.

The goal here is not to reduce the long and complex process of national independence to the fate of four heads, but rather to reflect on the role assigned to them in this national origin story and the formation of national subjects. As Lomnitz (2006) has shown, the cultural perception of death as a nationalistic popular construction in Mexico does not precede the state, but emerges and changes with it. If the execution of these insurgents was a way for the colonial government to punish them as individuals, their decapitation and public display was intended to control and punish the body politic. Still more important is the teaching of these events in which the termination of the public display of the dead signals the completion of Mexican sovereignty. It cannot be overlooked in this discussion that every person schooled in Mexico has learned that national sovereignty and effective statecraft results from the dialectic between the violently dislocated corpse and its orderly appropriation by the state.

Marcel Mauss observed long ago that, "from society to society, men know how to use their bodies" (Mauss 2006: 78). Although, as a "technique of the body," this lesson is less centered on the living self, it certainly provides Mexican subjects with a shared repertoire of understandings with which to approach the politics of the public dislocation of the dead.

With this background in mind, the image of expert hands maneuvering to undo the work of organized crime can be centrally contextualized within the repertoire of Mexican statecraft. Through the recovery of these heads, the state counteracts the transgressions of organized crime and restores a sense of order in this border city. However, there is a limit to the state's capacity to turn these deaths into a political resource when displays of violence that were once considered extreme in their nuanced theatricality increasingly seem mundane. When I expressed alarm at the "escalation of violence" in the region, one of my border contacts simply replied, "I'm getting bored with it, to tell you the truth. They lack imagination." He was referring to the cartels, but it is possible to extend the observation to state actors whose response to the death of Mexicans on the border has remained steadily technocratic and similar over the years.

In the next section, I turn to the handling of migrant deaths on the Arizona border, a phenomenon through which Mexican authorities have tried to reframe the perception of their authority over people and territory in terms of protection. Although the scenario is different and the interventions more intricate, the desired effects are similar to the previous case.

## Tending to Neglect: Migrant Death in the Arizona–Mexico Border

Accounts about the fatal inclemency of the Sonoran Desert stretch back to the Spanish settlers, but with the implementation of the 1994 Border Patrol Strategy and its shifting of flows, from tactically policed urban enclaves to remote regions, this desert recently became *the* site of migrant death and injury. Death tallies vary and accurate counts are made difficult by incommensurable jurisdictions, protocols, counting politics and procedures. The U.S. Border Patrol reports 2,994 border-crosser deaths between 2000 and 2007 on the Mexican border. Coalición Derechos Humanos, a migrant advocacy group that compiles data from the Examiner's Offices, puts 55 percent of those deaths in Arizona and tallies 2,004 bodies recovered between 2000 and 2009. Based on missing-person reports, the organization estimates as many as 5,000 deaths for the same period. Official death tolls are based only on bodies *recovered*. This makes the management of these bodies and their representation object of intense state investment and civic involvement. Ethnographic work with Mexican Consular Protection workers and civilian advocates in southern Arizona showed me that the technicalities of the repatriation of migrant remains are delicate components of border politics.

An omen of the times to come, the case known as the "Yuma 14" rattled the Mexican consulates in southern Arizona in May, 2001, changing radically their role in the region and the significance of their work to Mexico. By the end of the investigation, the bodies of 14 men were recovered along the path of their five-day journey

through the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge. "Exposure to the elements" is the official cause of death offered for the combined effect of dehydration, hyperthermia, and physical exertion experienced by most who die crossing the desert. In death, the "Yuma 14" incurred another form of exposure – the media's. With mounting pressure, Mexican consulate workers were forced to learn on the spot how to deal with the dead, the injured, and their families, as well as hospitals, morgues, the media, a wider range of American authorities, and their ever more-anxious superiors in Mexico City. Reflecting on this dramatic reorientation of the Consulates' *Departamentos de Protección* – from legal referrals to intense forensic and hospital work – the then-secretary to the Mexican Consul in Tucson said to me, "The deaths began to happen more and more frequently. So quickly, we were just not prepared. With the Yuma 14, a tidal wave [of death and injury cases] arrived, and we found out we just did not know how to keep afloat." Although attrition can be a problem, consular protection teams have managed to become cultural and institutional mediators in the identification and repatriation of migrant remains.

By strategically tending to the bodies of these migrants through its diplomatic instruments and representatives, the Mexican state attempts to recast itself in the models of paternalistic authority it has historically found productive. Theories of paternalism, according to Michel-Rolph Trouillot, posit the state "as an independent and supernatant entity, one that ideally calms the transient tensions of the social organism and intervenes to promote justice" in ways that tend to "rationalize and reinforce inequalities" (Trouillot 1990: 20). Every step in the repatriation process is marked by elaborate bureaucratic interventions to document, inspect, and authorize passage that, while they ultimately facilitate closure, reinforce the inequalities between those who have resources and those who do not. At the end of a quest that may take weeks and even months, the state, as a pallbearer of sorts, delivers the bodies to their families for burial. A good way to illustrate the repatriation process and its political outcomes is by looking at a case selected by Mexican authorities themselves to represent the technocratic success of consular protection. This is the story of Jesús Cabral and his remains.

Breaking a several-year pattern of reticence towards the media – thankfully not extended to anthropologists – Mexican Consul Juan Manuel Calderon approved intense coverage of Jesús's repatriation to showcase the consulate's protection labor. A special report about it appeared on the Sunday edition of the *Arizona Daily Star* on September 30, 2007, the end of the fiscal year by which migrant deaths are counted. I never met the Cabrals but, over the course of my work in the Sonoran Desert, I encountered many other families looking for kin, worked alongside *Protección* employees, and spent much time with journalists including the ones working this story.

Many migrants lose both their lives *and* their bodies to the desert. Although some bodies are actively searched for and found, most are stumbled upon, as it happened with Jesús's remains. He had entered the desert with a group of crossers on May 12, 2006, but he did not make it out. The abandonment and neglect in which his remains laid for almost a year stand in sharp contrast with the intensity of state maneuvers and media attention to which his family and his body were subjected over the summer of 2007. Just a few days short of a year after he had gone missing, the 44 sun-bleached bones that remained of John Doe 55, Jesús's initial forensic alias, were found in the

Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge. A quick inspection by a criminal investigator ruled out "foul play," freeing the remains for potential repatriation. In a context in which people are basically "let die," the declaration of their deaths as "natural" is politically profound. At the most basic level, the pronouncement absolves everyone from culpability and sets the stage for a politically productive technocratic performance around the handling of remains.

The effects of the desert on the human body quickly make the identification of remains a challenge, particularly when all that is left of a person is a few bones. In Jesús's case, forensic anthropologist Bruce Anderson concluded the remains were most likely those of a young male, most likely a border crosser, who had died from exposure. Jéronimo García, the employee from the Mexican Consulate in charge of death cases, inspected with Anderson the personal effects found with the body. One of Garcia's duties is to document and photograph all remains and belongings, and upload the information to a missing migrants database (SIRLI, System for the Identification of Remains and Localization of Individuals), so other Mexican officials may access it. This case was slightly different for Garcia, since photographer Dean Knuth had been authorized to shadow him by the Consul. At the time of the story, Knuth was the youngest photographer on staff at the *Daily Star*, and this assignment was just the right match for his gifted eye and a mantel waiting for awards. The savvy consular protection employee captured by Knuth seems a world away from the international relations graduate I met the summer of 2004 desperately dousing himself in Lysol in an effort to cover the smell of formaldehyde. Knuth's prize-winning photographs portray Garcia with masterful expertise, whether he is handling bones or a heartbroken mother on the phone.

In every case, every item is carefully inspected for clues leading to the person's identity – a phone number, a receipt, a letter. Jesús's voter ID proved decisive in his case not because the remains could be identified from the photograph or fingerprint on the card, but because it provided a name to trace. When he went missing, his brother had Jesús's information entered into SIRLI, so Garcia had no problem locating his next of kin. The indicators matching John Doe 55 and Jesús were strong, but the medical examiners needed conclusive evidence to surrender the body for repatriation. DNA testing was suggested.

In principle, the use of DNA testing to identify remains is a compelling idea; in practice, however, the Mexican insistence on centralized control can turn it into a bureaucratic nightmare. From the start, the Mexican government has insisted that all testing be done exclusively at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and that all data and DNA samples be sent through its Foreign Ministry headquarters in Mexico City. Cases can take up to a year. Adding to the delay, families must navigate obscure protocols, interagency politics, and distance. The Cabrals live a few hours from the border, but their blood samples would have had to hop south, from office to office, halfway across the country and then north, on a different but equally bureaucratic route. Once the test results were ready, they would have followed a path similar to that of the blood samples. Every stop is documented by a memo, every memo is a bureaucratic project involving several people, and every step is packed with a multiplicity of potential delays. Hoping to have Jesús's body back in Villa Juárez soon, the Cabral Family decided to forgo the certainty of DNA, and go with the alternative denture analysis suggested by the medical examiner. Only a photograph showing Jesús smiling was needed. To make a long story short, instead of sending an electronic

scan of the photo to Tucson, the original photographs took the slow path of officialdom to Mexico City and then north. Almost two months had passed from the day the 44 bones were found to the arrival of the photographs.

It was a match. The repatriation process then began. A series of hurdles – logistical, financial, political, and even sanitary – must be cleared before bodies can retrace their way home for final rest. Federal recognition of the body as that of a Mexican national must be obtained. Funds must be petitioned. Public health certificates must be granted. Official death certificates must be paired with certified translation equivalents. Protection workers must file customs forms declaring that the "packages" lack commercial value. Air and ground transportation must be arranged. The resulting docket that accompanies each body can be as thick as an inch and represent several days' worth of work.

Unwilling to wait any longer, Jesús's brother drove to the border to pick up the remains as soon as the basic documentation had cleared. With the help of U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials, he loaded the casket onto the bed of a pickup at the Nogales Port of Entry and drove home, photographer and reporter in tow.

During the 2007 fiscal year, 237 bodies were recovered from southern Arizona, a 30 percent increase from 2006. Despite the discouraging death toll, Jesús's story was presented as a case of success – state success. The account illustrates how binational state apparatuses process bodies and manage individual death cases in ways that render state intervention not only legitimate, but necessary. By diverting attention from the conditions and policies that cause these deaths to the logistics of recovery, the Mexican state transforms its role in these migration stories. The intense technocratic performance orchestrated around the recovery, identification, repatriation, or storage of bodies serves to further mark the state's signature on this border and on the people subjected to it. The reporting on the story of Jesús's body is similar to the photograph taken by the Mexican police officer outside the Nogales cemetery; one of its goals was to capture and display the intervention of the state on the dead bodies produced by this border. This public complement to the pronouncements, inspections, reports, permits, and memoranda required for the legal, southbound movement of dead bodies across the border and secured through the labor of Mexico's Consular Protection teams are a way by which the Mexican state reasserts the strength of its capacity to intervene on behalf of the dead and regulate the living at the very limits of its territorial and legal domains. Certainly, post-mortem interventions do not always unfold well for the state. However, as this discussion has shown, the politics and practices that place life and death at the heart of the modern state are rendered visible at the state's margins, but more importantly, the challenges that boundaries represent to state authority can be mobilized to renew and strengthen the state's effects.

## Conclusion

The aim of this examination has been to contribute to the idea that when politics and practices that compromise individual life become central to life of the nation, the dead body becomes a site on which social, political, and spatial claims are defined. Although my focus remained on Mexican state actors, the cases discussed looked at dynamics unfolding on both sides of the boundary. While Mexico and the United States seem

incapable of an agreement to effectively manage border flows, when it comes to dealing with its resulting casualties the most formidable form of interstate cooperation takes place. The casualties of the drug trade and the dead bodies of migrants betray both states' limited ability to protect, secure and provide for its subjects effectively, consequently turning some their vulnerable into sacrificial fodder to the systemic national dependencies on illicit transborder economies. Herein lies the paradox, through strategic management, that the dead bodies that could be indexical of the state's failures at its borders are turned into political resources that help strengthen its claims to authority over people and territory. Among the myriad challenges the northern border has historically represented for Mexico, the deaths of Mexican subjects there create opportunities for the state to emphasize its protective proficiency and authority despite the structural abandonment and weakness that cause these deaths in the first place. The Mexican politics of death at work here develop not from the state's ability to kill or let die, but through its capacity to affect the representation and resignify the perception of the publically dislocated death of certain marginal subjects. Ultimately, if the forensic removal of bodies from public sites and the repatriation focus of consular protection work on the border are of any political significance, it may very well be in that they reveal the centrality of death to the politics of safety and protection. Put differently, some states claim to protect the living by tending to the dead.

## REFERENCES

Agamben, Giorgio, 1998 Homo sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Barragán, César, and Arturo González, 2010 Cuelgan dos cabezas en cerco de panteón. El Diario de Sonora. Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico.

Biehl, Joao, 2005 Vita: Life in a Zone of Social Abandonment. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Butler, Judith, 2004 Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence. London: Verso.

Das, Veena, and Deborah Poole, eds., 2004 Anthropology in the Margins of the State. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.

Douglas, Mary, 1985 Risk Acceptability According to the Social Sciences. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Farmer, Paul, 2003 Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Fassin, Didier, 2007 When Bodies Remember: Experiences and Politics with AIDS in South Africa. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Feldman, Allen, 1991 Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Foucault, Michel, 2003 Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the College de France. New York: Picador.

Lomnitz, Claudio A., 2006 Death and the Idea of Mexico. Brooklyn: Zone Books.

Magaña, Rocío, 2008 Bodies on the Line: Life, Death, and Authority on the Arizona–Mexico Border, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago.

Mauss, Marcel, 2006 Techniques, Technology and Civilisation. Oxford: Berghahn Books / Durkheim Press.

Mbembe, Achille, 2003 Necropolitics. Public Culture 15: 11–40.

Petryna, Adriana, 2002 Life Exposed: Biological Citizens after Chernobyl. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Stern, Alejandra M., 2005 Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph, 1990 Haiti, State against Nation: The Origins and Legacy of Duvalierism. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Turner, Terence, 1980 The Social Skin. *In* Not Work Alone: A Cross-Cultural View of Activities Superfluous to Survival. J. Cherfas and Roger Lewin, eds. pp. 111–140. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; London: Temple Smith. Reprinted 1993 *In* The Body as Social Text. C. Burroughs and J. Ehrenreich, eds. pp. 15–39. Ames, IA: University of Iowa Press. Reprinted 2007 *In* Beyond the Body Proper: Reading the Anthropology of Material Life. Judith Farquhar and Margaret Locke, eds. pp. 83–103. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

CHAPTER 10

# DISSECTION
## *The Body in Tatters: Dismemberment, Dissection, and the Return of the Repressed*

*Nancy Scheper-Hughes*

"The dead don't care"

(Thomas Lynch, *The Undertaking*)

"When I saw [John's] photograph I realized why the obituaries had so disturbed me. I had allowed other people to think that he was dead. I had allowed him to be buried alive… It occurred to me that I was supposed to give John's clothes away. I had resisted. I had no idea why… I was not yet prepared to address the suits and shirts and jackets but I thought I could handle what remained of his shoes, a start. I stopped at the door to the room. I could not give away the rest of his shoes… [and] then I realized why: he would need shoes if he were to return."

(Joan Didion, *The Year of Magical Thinking*)

### Prologue: Land of the Living Dead

The dead may not care what happens to them, but the living do. The dead exercise a powerful imaginative and spiritual force over the survivors which Joan Didion calls "magical thinking" and Freud (1915) called the return of the repressed. Magical

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Nancy Scheper-Hughes. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

thinking refers to the unsettling and haunting physical and material residues, the presence of the not-so-good-enough dead, in Didion's case her husband and her long-term intellectual collaborator. The dead are uncanny.[1] They inhabit rooms, closets, attics, and clothing. They return, unbidden, especially if they are unhappy or have unfinished business. Just as often, however, the living conjure up the dead with whom *they* have unfinished agendas.

Example: Exiting a plane several years ago I recognized, a few persons ahead of me, the familiar shape of an arm – long, pale, slender, and graceful – extending from a striped short-sleeve shirt, both of which I recognized as belonging to my dead father. I rudely pushed aside the passengers to reach the elderly gray-haired figure before he disappeared into the crowd and lightly touched his arm. The reverie was broken as soon the stranger turned around. On seeing the disappointment, grief, and longing in my face, the old man likely grasped the source of my error. He smiled kindly at my mumbled apology: So sorry, I thought you were someone else. … "

The dead are restless and need to be pacified and distracted. Country people in County Kerry, Ireland up through the mid 20th century entertained the dead during house wakes that could last for days of merry-making, pranks, and games that included propping up the dead person and lifting a "*supeen*" of Paddy's whiskey so the "bleedy (bloody) gullet won't be too dry" going into the hole. I refer to the *person* rather than the *body* of the deceased to emphasize that death does not destroy personhood but often intensifies it.

But once they are judged to be "good and dead" the deceased have to be *put in their place*: nailed shut inside a box, sealed inside a mausoleum, shipped off to sea on a flower-strewn boat, set aflame as a burnt offering. Like all *rites de passage*, death rituals must be carried out according to cultural and historical notions of probity and dignity. The dead must be properly disposed: by *fire* if Hindu, by *water* if a seafarer, covered by *earth* (human = humus, earth to earth, dust to dust) if orthodox-ly Christian, Jew or Moslem, by human consumption / compassionate cannibalism, if a certain tribe of Amazonian Indian (Conklin 2001). The Yahi Indians of California buried their dead unless they fell into the hands of enemies, in which case they asked for "cremation," escape by fire. Ishi, of whom we shall hear more later in this chapter, the so called last of the Yahi, communicated to his handler, Alfred Kroeber, that he wished to be cremated. Thus, we can imagine how Ishi viewed the anthropologists who housed him so kindly in the Anthropology Museum, then located at U.C. San Francisco Medical Center.

The dead shouldn't be buried too soon for Catholics or too late for Jews and Moslems. In rural Ireland in the 1970s the exact timing of death was a mystery. Not even Father Leahy, the local curate, knew when the soul left the body. "So, Morrisheen (Muirisín) told me, 'We don't like to bury them when they're still too fresh.'"

The dead are sociable and like to be visited. Otherwise they may make visits on their own accord. The dead like fresh flowers, though among upwardly mobile peasants in some parts of the world, plastic flowers are preferred. The dead are hungry and have a special weakness for sugared skulls in Mexico on the day of the dead (Brandes 2006) or care packages of sticky-rice in southeast Asia. The dead like alcohol or Coca-Cola libations sprinkled on the ground in their name. The dead like shrines, candles, and pastel crepe-paper cut outs. The dead, who have so much ground to cover, may return looking for their shoes (Didion, above). Or their stockings.

When my key informant Biu's twelve-year-old daughter, Xoxa, returned from the sugar plantation where she was working in Timbauba, Brazil, in 1987 to learn that her little sister, Mercea, had died in her absence, she grieved deeply. It bothered Xoxa that her baby sister was buried with bare feet and she was awakened by apparitions of Mercea hovering over her hammock and pointing to her bare and bruised feet. "She can't speak," Xoxa told me, "like all angel-babies she is mute." Several months later I accompanied Xoxa to an open-air market where we purchased a pretty pair of white stockings. When the street merchant asked just how tall the little girl was, Xoxa whispered in my ear to ask if Mercea might have grown some while underground. I said she might add an inch or so, which pleased her older sister. "Confirmation or Baptism?"[2] the street vendor asked as she dug through a pile of inexpensive but decorative white stockings. "Both," we answered together in unison knowing that the little girl's baptism was conducted rather informally and over her dead body in its plywood coffin, and that confirmation of the dead might be a good, even if theologically and logically implausible. When we reached the cemetery we found that Mercea's grave had been cleared and the space claimed and reused by an unlucky pair of twin infants. Mercea's remains had been tossed into the "bone depository" in the back of the grave yard. I comforted Xoxa, reminding her that Mercea was now a spirit child and we could bury the pretty stockings next to the *ossario* where she could easily find them. "Does a spirit have legs and feet?" Xoxa asked. "Let's see what happens," I replied, as we dug a small hole and buried the lacy stockings. The haunting ended for several months, but then Mercea again reappeared. "She wants something else," Xoxa said tearfully, "but I don't know what it is." "Maybe she just wants to thank you," I said.

## Intact Bodies

*"They have numbered all my bones"*

(Psalm 22)

At birth the newborn's fingers, toes and other appendages are identified, numbered, and inspected by the midwife or the *doula*. "It's all there" she announces to the relief of the parents. The dead, too, want to be buried intact, no missing limbs, brain, heart, liver, eyes. How else will they be able to navigate the river Styx, see the ancestors, or stand on their two feet before their Maker?

While studying infant mortality in Brazil in the 1980s (Scheper-Hughes 1993) I spent a good deal of time in the *municipio* of Timbauba / *Bom Jesus da Mata* graveyard. Dead infants arrived steadily, most carried in their little blue and silver lightweight coffins by a procession of children, although some neonates arrived in cardboard shoeboxes balanced on the head of the midwife or friend the family, Timbauba being a center of small scale shoe factories. Sometimes baby coffins arrived tucked casually, like a Christmas gift, under the arm of its grieving father. So, I was not totally surprised to pass a small circle of sugar mill (*usina*) workers in their workaday attire, rubber boots and sackcloth pants held up with belts of rope. They must have come directly from the mill to bury a *companheiro*'s infant. The tiny coffin was just being gently put down into its shallow grave. I joined the group for a few "Hail Marys" and a

"Glory Be" and then asked, as delicately as possible, whose child it was. "*Criança, nada* – child nothing!" One of the men replied. "It's our *companheiro* Severino's foot!" The foot had been mangled in the jaws of the sugar mill and amputated at the local hospital. Severino's coworkers were charged with making sure the foot was given a proper burial, so that it would be waiting for the rest of his body when his time came.

This chapter is an anthropological / ethnographic / ethno-theological reflection on the body as "fearfully and wondrously made" (Psalm 139), as a unified corporeal assemblage that is dismantled, disarticulated, dissected in life or in death at great cost. While there are organs that are perceived as indispensable to the sense of self / personhood (heart, face, hands, legs, trunk, brain, lungs, stomach) other body parts and organs (pancreas, liver, heart valves) invisible, mute, and "absent" to the self (Leder 1990) are disguised and concealed from the individual's anatomical schemata or body image. While injured limbs and diseased organs are removed through amputation or other life-saving surgeries they are not easily forgotten.

In his autobiography, *The Spirit of St Louis*, Charles Lindbergh tells the story of his grandfather, who stumbled against a spinning saw at the sawmill where he was employed. The saw's teeth cut into his arm near the shoulder and ripped open his back. The gash was so deep that his coworkers could see their friend's heart beating. They bound up his wounds, laid him on top of straw in an oxcart and carried him home to the family. The nearest doctor in St Cloud took three days to arrive. By then there was nothing for it but to amputate the arm and stitch together the hole in his grandfather's back. Lying on his bed in great pain, Lindbergh's grandfather asked to see his severed arm before it was buried in the garden. It was brought to him in a small, rough hewn coffin. The man took its fingers into the palm of his good, right hand and said in halting, broken English: "You have been good and faithful friend to me for fifty years. But you can't be with me any longer. So good-bye, good-bye my friend" (Lindbergh 1953: 221–222).

I introduce this as an example of a hitherto under-examined and under-theorized topic in the anthropology of bodies, what I am calling for lack of a better term *body-love*, understood as an intuitive, existentially given, sense and appreciation of the body's design and of the inalienability of its parts, both the visual and obvious head, trunk, limbs, and skin, and its silent and "absent" organs and tissues that only make their presence known through disease, wounding, or excision. The history and distribution of body modification, scarification, tattooing, genital, plastic, and sexual reassignment surgeries might be seen as a deviation from what I am describing. But rather they are the most cogent expression of individual and / or cultural (and therefore diverse) internalized "anatomical schema" (de Preester and Knockaert 2005) conforming to the given body-image. I will not, however, be discussing pathological conditions – anorexias, "wanna-be amputees" (Elliott 2003), self-cutting, etc. based on perverse or fetishistic distortions of body image and design. Traumatic injury can upset the body scheme to the extent that one can temporarily dis-identify with the damaged body part. Although Oliver Sacks (1998) miraculously saved himself by inching his way down a mountainside on the seat of his pants after severely damaging his leg in an encounter with a bull on a solitary stretch of Norway, in hospital he suddenly refused to accept the injured leg as belonging to him. The experience was transitory and his normal body-sense was restored, including the alienated limb.

The most cogent example of the internalized anatomical schema is Merleau-Ponty's (1962) description of the "phantom limb" as the perception of the body's complete anatomical schemata in those who have suddenly experienced an amputation. The ghost limb – the limb that is gone – returns to haunt the body with its ethereal but deeply felt and intact presence. The phantom limb – arm, foot, leg or fingers – retains the position of the original body part at the moment of the injury or trauma. The pain can be unbearable but even "anesthesia with cocaine does not do away with [it]" (1962: 66). The clinical and psychological literature contains many cases of phantom limbs without amputation, resulting from a brain injury, and people who suffer the absence of limbs who were born without them. Phantom limbs appear in paraplegics and in those who have suffered a complete break in the spinal cord and who nonetheless insist that they experience feeling in their legs and lower body. For Merleau-Ponty, the body is not a mechanical object but a lived, embodied subjectivity: "To have a phantom arm is to remain open to all the action of which the arm alone is capable; it is to retain the practical field which one enjoyed before mutilation … The body is one's vehicle in the world and having a body is, for a living creature, to be intervolved in a definitive environment, to identify oneself with certain projects, and to be continually committed to them" (1962: 71). Thus, even when a limb is suddenly gone forever the person retains the memory and possibilities for its use even though they can never again be taken up as a project in the world. The phantom limb is a symbol of corporeal intactness and of the person's "total awareness of their posture in the intersensory world" (1962: 86) akin to Bourdieu's "habitus."

Against this view, however, are equally gripping narratives of naturalized (born) or traumatized amputees who, like 28-year-old Diane deVries, initially described by Geyla Frank as "a woman born with all the physical equipment she would need to live comfortably in our society – except arms and legs." (*Venus on Wheels*), and Albie Sachs (*Soft Vengeance of a Freedom Fighter*), express an equally intuitive and passionate attachment to their truncated bodies, the missing limbs seen (in the first instance) not only as natural to the self but as a sign of freedom, beauty and agility (despite all) or (in the second instance) as a manifest symbol of one's political love and embodied commitment to the anti-apartheid struggle and the beloved community. In the case of Diane, Frank noted the frequent verbal references to her presumptive legs (made present even by mention of their absence) – as in friends teasing, "If you don't have a drink, I'll sit on your legs," and Diane's own dream experiences and faith-based experience of the "restoration" of her legs, thus conforming to the notion of a given anatomical schema. According to Frank, Diane claimed that she taught her sister to dance because there was a Diane within her own body who was born, although legless and armless, already knowing how to dance.[3]

## Phantom Kidneys

In this same vein, buried in the thicket of annotated and translated and transcribed field notes and interviews with kidney sellers in / from Brazil, Moldova, Israel, Syria, Egypt, Turkey, the Philippines and the United States, accumulated over the past twelve years (Scheper-Hughes 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2008), I discovered a variation of the phantom limb: the *"phantom kidney."* What distinguishes the phantom kidney is the sudden apparition and presence of what was, prior to the nephrectomy (kidney

removal) an invisible, absent, even covert organ. I have argued (without success) that the "Phantom Kidney Syndrome" deserves a special notation in the latest revision of the DSM-IV.[4] It belongs under the broader category of "Somataform Disorders," physical symptoms that are disabling and even occasionally life-threatening but that cannot be explained by organic / medical conditions. Thus, they are categorized as pathological mind-body-social (I would add, political and economic) relations[5] (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987, Scheper-Hughes 1994).

Prior to surgical removal, kidney sellers often dismiss the kidney of last resort as a thing of little value of worth, as a supernumerary, "stupid," "dirty," "little thing"[6] until the "redundant" kidney is excised and the "empty nest" or "empty pocket" suddenly becomes the locus and explanation for everything that has gone wrong in the lives of the vendor. The "phantom kidney" acts up. Some young men in rural Moldova described an absent kidney that wiggles or hops, itches or stings, contracts or expands. The phantom kidney is described as bloated and needing to urinate. The missing kidney inflicts pain, turns one's eyes or skin yellow, and is attributed by some villagers as a cause of premature death. ("He sold the organ that makes the urine flow.") The lonely remaining kidney also suffers. It is described by some kidney sellers as "old before its time," "used up" or simply as "tired" as a consequence of being forced to do the work of two, to work overtime. Among agricultural workers in Moldova the allusion to overwork and overtime and to doing the work of others is a critique of a diseased individual within an ailing collective and collectivist body in villages where the *kholkhoz,* or model collectivist farm system is still the local mode of production and highly valued.[7]

"I never knew how much the little thing (*coisinha*) meant to me, until he was gone," a kidney seller, Paulo, from Recife, Brazil told me. "That damn kidney keeps me up at night. I can feel it drumming inside the empty pocket." Niculae Bardan of Mingir, Moldova expressed his fear of imminent death, wiping a tear from his eye with dirt encrusted fingers. "What if I die for the loss of my kidney?," a fear further complicated by the village critique that if so, he would have died "for naught," for "nothing," for a mere payment of $2,700. A "stupid peasant" he took his "kidney" to the market and had exchanged it for a "basket of rotten apples." "Stupid donkey" Dom Vasile upbraided his sick-to-death son, Validimir, who did, in fact, die of an infection following his illicit kidney removal in Istanbul. "The kidney belongs to God," the local Eastern Orthodox priest in Mingir said in a sermon to his mostly elderly parishioners in 2002 during the filming of a French TV documentary on kidney trafficking[8] in which I collaborated.

> When a fox catches a chicken, the little one cries. I was the chicken, and the buyer was the fox. In the dawn of the operation my tears were dropping so frenziedly that the shower could not even wash away those eye drops. I felt like a *kurbanir goru*, sacrificed cow purchased for slaughtering on the day of Eid, the biggest celebration in Bangladesh. (Dildar, a 32 year old kidney seller. In Moniruzzaman 2010: 223)

Moniruzzaman, described something similar among the 33 kidney sellers he interviewed in Bangladesh, an extreme form of what I have called "kidney seller's regret," focusing on the ruination of one's body. Prior to the nephrectomy surgery Bangladeshi sellers surrendered their bodies to repeated clinical pre-screening of their blood, tissue

and urine. On the day of the operation they were washed down like animals, shaved of their body hair, and trussed and bound to their surgical gurneys "like cows strapped down for the slaughter." Later, the Bangladeshi sellers asked themselves the question that I heard from kidney sellers in several languages, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian, Hebrew and English: "*What have I done to myself?*"

## The Kid and the Kidney: Strange Symmetries

Kidneys, "*kidleys,*" "kiddies or "kittys" – as kidneys are variously described by organ sellers who are not primarily English speakers but who use the English word or some variant of it to describe a global commodity that is sold for American dollars, for "greenbacks," "paid in green." Sellers who suddenly became aware of its existence, describe their kidney as a kid-ly, looking something like an embryo or an aborted fetus, a symbolic connection often noted by my free-trade critics. Was I opposed to a woman's right to abort a fetus? If not, why did I resist the individual's right to "abort" and sell a spare kidney?

The association between missing kidneys and missing kids was introduced in conversations with Adriana Robin (not her real name), a Good Samaritan kidney donor from northern California, who freely gave her kidney to a stranger she had never met except through a plea on the Internet: "I am begging you for the gift of life." The recipient was described by two of his "friends" as a young man in his 30s, the father of two little children, healthy and hard-working, but suffering from irreversible kidney failure. "I imagined myself as an angel of mercy, rescuing an entire family," Adriana told me. As a divorced woman, who, she said, had "failed" at everything – marriage, career, fertility, and fertility treatments (including IVF) – the kidney donation was a path to personal fulfillment, and an alternative way to "give birth." She flew at her own expense to a university hospital in South Carolina where she was to meet the man whose life she would rescue. She imagined her kidney-removal operation as a kind of virgin birth until she met the elderly man who received her "gift of life" and she realized that she had been duped. She had fallen into the hands of Internet organs brokers, and she realized that her recipient was not the man she hoped would take home her kid/kidney. Trapped, Adriana went through with the procedure but a year later she was still lodging complaints against the university transplant team and the "donor advocate" who urged her to go ahead with the donation.

## Body Love

Love of the body as a wondrous gift has a long history in early Christianity, in Kant's philosophy of the inalienability of body parts (Morelli 1999) as well as in phenomenology.

During the Catholic sacrament for the dying, a medieval rite originally called Extreme Unction (or final blessing) the priest tenderly anoints with holy oil each of the sensory organs of the dying person, the eyes, ears, nostrils, lips, hands and feet, and, (for men only) the loins. Pausing at each body-site the priest recites the benediction: "Through this holy anointing … may the Lord pardon whatever sins or faults thou hast committed by sight" [or by hearing, smell, taste, touch, walking, or sexual

excess or dereliction]. Sin, pleasure, and carnal love are conjoined in a fond farewell to the flesh, organ by organ.

Traditionally, the Catholic Church forbade cremation because it seemed like a taunt to the creator: "See if you can put these burned offerings back together!" Christians eagerly anticipated the resurrection of the dead, but the early Church fathers and the medieval scholastics puzzled over the fine points: Will I be resurrected as a virile man in the blush of youth or as the old, withered man I will be on my deathbed? Will the amputee by resurrected in his / her wholeness? These same anxieties are reflected today in the reluctance of Catholics, even after the Vatican officially allowed cremation in 1963, to cremate their loved ones. Burial still seemed a better bet for expediting the body's resurrection. To this day, the Church does not permit cremation to take place until after the funeral mass. The dead body must be present to be honored and to receive the blessings and the prayers of the priest and the congregation. Only after the funeral mass is over can the body be cremated and a second service held at the crematorium or at the cemetery where the cremated remains are interred.

In *Commodifying Bodies* (Scheper-Hughes and Wacquant 2005), Stanley Brandes tells the touching story of a Guatemalan migrant worker to California who was hit by a car on a highway and killed instantly. His body was taken to the San Mateo County Morgue where his identity was established, a sister located in San Francisco, and plans for his disposal discussed. There were three options: cremation and the remains shipped to Guatemala for burial, cremation and the ashes disposed of locally, or the most expensive option, the shipping of the Axel Flores' body back to his village in the highlands of Guatemala. Axel's elderly father in the village of "Nahualtenango" insisted on the last, disregarding the expense and bureaucratic difficulty. The old man mortgaged the family home and took a loan at very high interest. When the sister in San Francisco went to collect the body, however, she was told that a terrible error had occurred. There had been a mix-up at the morgue (two Latino migrants looked alike, the director said) and "Axel Flores" had been cremated by mistake.

The family sued for damages on behalf of the deceased, whose destiny in the afterlife was now rendered uncertain. How could Axel be resurrected if there was no body to resurrect? Advised by city lawyers, Axel's relatives sued for the torment they were suffering at home where they were forced to hide the shameful fact of the cremation and yet had no answer to the persistent questioning of the neighbors: "And the body? Where is the body? When will it arrive?" The accident at the morgue deprived the relatives of the Axel's bodily presence among them. Without the body there could be no wake during which the family would receive the support and consolation of their fellow villagers. Without the body there could be no *Misa de Cuerpo Presente*, the Mass of the dead body present, celebrated with the coffin rolled out on a dolly in front of the altar. Without the body, there would be nothing to bury. But the greatest agony for Axel's parents was the absence of their son's body in the village cemetery where visits to the dead are frequent throughout the year and central to the celebration of *Día de los Muertos*. "This is our final abode," Axel's father told Brandes sadly, as they walked through the village cemetery. "Here is where all of us from the village come to rest. Here is where we are reunited" (Brandes 2005).

In her prolific writings on Christianity in the Middle Ages, Caroline Walker Bynum (1992, 1995, 1998; Bynum and Gerson 1997) identifies a central paradox of Christian

belief for the faithful: belief in the resurrection of the body despite the all-too-obvious evidence of human decay and fragmentation after death. The scholastics worried about the relation of body parts to the whole and how all the scattered and decayed bits would be reintegrated. Christians in the second and third centuries "went to extraordinary lengths to collect and reassemble the dismembered pieces of the martyrs for burial." An example of body love that surpasses death is exemplified in the torture and martyrdom of a fourth-century Christian saint, James the Persian, also known as "James the Dismembered." Described both in Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox *Lives of the Saints*, St James the Mutilated is quoted as tenderly addressing each of his toes as they were being pulled apart and severed by Roman soldier torturers.[9] When the executioner cut off his thumb, James turned his eyes to heaven and prayed God to "receive the first branch of this tree" (Papadopoulos and Lizardos 1982: 678). So on with the second and the third digit. "Go, third toe, to thy companions, and as the grain of wheat bears much fruit, so shalt thou rest with thy fellows unto the last day… Be comforted, little toe, because great and small shall have the same resurrection. A hair of the head shall not perish, and how much less shalt thou, the least of all, be separated from thy fellows" (Bynum 1992: 294). Afterwards, the soldiers severed James the Persian's feet at the ankles, then at the knees, and then his hands and arms. "But the resolute one endured with a great soul, as he saw his fingers, hands and legs on the ground" (Papadopoulos and Lizardos 1982: 678). In a the final coup de grace the saint was beheaded. Some of his Christian followers, we are told, hid in nearby bushes and after the soldiers left the scene, they came out of hiding to gather up the fragments of the body of their holy martyr, and they are said to have "buried these relics devoutly and with honor."

These sentiments are not dissimilar to the demands by relatives of the victims of 9/11 that all body parts and fragments unearthed by construction workers at ground zero be carefully recovered and identified. Family members staged protests while cranes and bulldozers turned up debris that might contain fragments of their loved ones. Fearing that human remains mixed in with the debris would be used to fill New York City potholes, family members of the victims called for an interruption of construction work at the "sacred site" until military forensic specialists were called in to comb the area for any human remains.[10]

Similarly, orthodox Jews in Israel support an organization, Zaka, comprised of religious observant Jews who are trained as forensic volunteers who are called upon to assemble at the scenes of traffic accidents, terrorist attacks, and suicide bombs (Stadler 2005). Dressed in distinctive bright yellow life jackets and plastic gloves Zaka team members hover at the scenes of mass violence until ambulances and police leave and they are left to scour the streets and scrape the walls of buildings, trees, busses, and sidewalks retrieving the tiniest bits of flesh and blood which they put in plastic containers so that they can be buried in accordance with orthodox tradition along with the rest of the dead body. But before burial, all the fragments assembled, classified, and matched by the volunteers are required by law to be dispatched to the secular professionals at the National Forensic Institute at Abu Kabir, a neighborhood in Tel Aviv. Ironically, the Institute at Abu Kabir has been accused of illicit harvesting and stockpiling the organs and tissues of Israeli citizens, Palestinians, tourists, political activists and even the victims of terrorist attacks inside Israel (Scheper-Hughes 2010).

## Incorruptibility of the Body

Gradually, Christian theologians accepted the resurrection of the body as a miracle that existed beyond the realm of human comprehension, although they continued to write tracts that referred to the "life of the body" after death, exemplified in the growth of the hair and fingernails of corpses. The primary Roman Catholic symbol of belief in the resurrection of the body was the incorruptibility of the bodies of saints that did not putrefy after death and burial. They could be described as Egyptian mummies without the wraps.[11] Unlike ordinary mortals, disinterred saints' bodies announced their sanctity by their intactness and by excluding the sweet fragrance of incense, flowers, or warm milk.

Love is never far from death in the popular films based on the novels and short stories of Gabriel García Márquez, but one in particular, *Miracle in Rome* (*Milagro en Roma*) produced for Spanish TV in 1988, treats the arcane and bureaucratic path to the canonization of Catholic sainthood with sensitivity, absurdist humor, and pathos. The fast track to beatification and sainthood is through "scientifically verified" (as defined by the Vatican) miracles, including the undoctored and otherwise inexplicable preservation of the dead body of the saintly candidate. *Miracle in Rome* opens with a bereaved father, a lonely widower in rural Colombia who loses his beautiful seven-year-old daughter, Evelia, to a strange malady. On visiting her grave a dozen years later to comply with a public project to clear the old cemetery and rebury the coffins in a new gravesite, Margarido, the father, discovers his daughter's body to be perfectly preserved, exactly as she was at the time she was buried. The local townspeople greet the event as a miracle but the town bishop is a secular administrator and wants nothing to do with these absurd folk pieties. He wants the child reburied along with the other disinterred remains.

Horrified, Margarido packs his daughter's body into a large box that looks something like a case for a musical instrument and he escapes to Rome where he tries to get the attention of the Pope. Margarido sets off a metal detector at the Vatican with a mechanical monkey that had spontaneously jumped into action at Evelia's wake. The child's toy is now a relic, the father tries to explain before being forced out into the street. Day after day the man carries his daughter's fresh-as-life corpse around Rome, visiting various functionaries,[12] and at night he lays the little girl out on a hotel bed to sleep. The film ends with one of Marquez's predictable and characteristic flights into magical realism that can be left to reader's imagination.

Although the fictional protagonist, Margarido, failed to meet and convince the Pope of his daughter's sainthood, the Vatican continues to rule on the candidacy of saints to this day through the same arcane and macabre process. Currently Pope Benedict XVI has initiated the first step toward sainthood, beatification, for Cardinal John Henry Newman. The final step requires three bona fide miracles. Newman's physical remains have been disinterred and bits of his bone and hair are now enshrined across Catholic Europe in satin-lined gilt receptacles. In July 2009 the Vatican announced that a first miracle attributed to the dead Cardinal's intercession was "authenticated." An American court official, Jack Sullivan, who was suffering with intractable back pain, complicated by failed surgeries, was cured completely after praying to Cardinal Newman for help. Newman, described as "the most electrifying religious thinker and writer in English in the past 200 years" (Cornwell 2010: 1), a poet, essayist, philosopher and theologian, and a late-in-life convert to Roman Catholicism from the

Anglican Church, would be rather skeptical of the canonization process. Newman was an erudite scholar, critical of the Pope's infallibility, and he argued for the application of reason and independence of conscience, hardly Roman Catholic virtues. Lord knows what the Cardinal would think about his own sainthood and the ghastly process through which it is being pursued.

In 2001 I interviewed Michael Baden, chief medical examiner of New York City for more than 25 years. Baden had given a second opinion in the famous case of a living related organ donor who died two days after the removal of a large portion of his liver which was transplanted successfully into the body of his younger brother. In the course of the rambling interview, which went on for the better part of an afternoon in Badan's beautiful midtown Manhattan penthouse, the famous forensic pathologist shared some other highlights of his long and prestigious career. One of these was his pivotal role in the revisited and reopened case of the murder of civil rights leader Medgar Evers, who was shot in the back while getting out of his car in Jackson Mississippi on June 12, 1963. More than 30 years after the event, Baden was invited by a local district attorney to perform an autopsy which required the exhumation of Evers' grave in Arlington National Cemetery. Despite the years that had elapsed, Baden was pretty sure that there would be sufficient skeletal remains to reconstruct the path of the gunshot wound. The bones would reveal the bullet's trajectory and eventually implicate the killer, a man with the unforgettable and poetic name of Byron de la Beckwith, who was an old man and still living at large.

Since it was such a high-profile and sensitive case Badan sought permission from all the living relatives of the slain civil rights hero. One of Evers' children, his son, Van, would only give permission if he could be present at the disinterment and the autopsy. Like many younger African-Americans, Evers distrusted the justice process and the uses and abuses of dead bodies by forensic pathologists given the history of what Harriet Washington (2006) has called "medical apartheid," "the dark history of medical experimentation on Black Americans from colonial times to the present." Baden's concern was how difficult the exhumation of his murdered father would be for the son to witness, but the young man insisted and the pathologist relented on just one condition. He asked to be allowed to open the coffin first. Baden wanted to be able to prepare the son for what he would have to observe. The son was a baby at the time his father was killed and he had no living memory of his father. And this, Baden thought, would make the burden a bit easier on the son. At the time of the forensic examination Van Evers was in his mid thirties, about the same age as his father when he was killed. So Evers, the son, traveled to Arlington where he met up with Michael Baden and the district attorney for the disinterment. From there Van would accompany the casket to Albany, New York where the complete autopsy was to be performed.

While Van Evers rested in his hotel room that first night in Arlington, Baden went directly to the morgue and with his assistants forced open the casket that had been disinterred by federal marshals. At this point in the telling, Baden stopped for a moment and bent down to scoop up one of his Yorkshire Terriers onto his lap. "More tea?" he asked. "Please, go on with the story," I pleaded. "Well," he said, "nothing in my career prepared me for what I saw when I lifted the top off that casket. Medgar looked like he had just died the day before. His hands were crossed over his chest. His face was relaxed. Some pine needles that had been put in the coffin with him were

still green. I ran to the phone and called Van to come over right away to the morgue, not to wait to the following morning."

"What was his reaction?" I asked.

"The biggest shock for Van was looking at his father for the first time and seeing the face of a man that could be his double. The son's knees gave way, and he fell into the arms of the district attorney and they hugged each other. I was still too stunned to say or do anything."

"What's the forensic science explanation?"

"There isn't one. What do you think?"

"No idea. But I know what my third grade nun, Sister Teresa, would say."

"And she'd be right," the medical examiner said with chagrin. "I figured that I was looking at the body of a saint."

The dead body is uncanny. I also know what my late Irish friend, Taylor Dean, the village agnostic of Ballybran, West Kerry would say. We exchanged all sorts of local lore, ghosts stories, and what not to entertain each other through that long, endless wet winter of 1974–5, our arms crossed firmly across our chests, the fierce Atlantic wind blowing at our backs. Taylor Dean would say "Now, I don't believe in any of these 'tings, but I tell you what, girl, *be on the safe side, be on the safe side, in case it might be there*." Pascal's wager in the mountain village of Ballybran. "Well said. Good advice," I replied.

## Saint Olaf's Leg: On Relics

Living with his famous family on the Greek island of Corfu, Gerald Durrell (1956), whose older brother Lawrence would later write the "Alexandria Quartet," described his traumatic visit to a 16th-century church dedicated to the medieval saint, Spyridon, whose powers include warding off illness and ill fortune (especially accidents). On that day the priests of Corfu town opened the silver casket of the saint to display his mummified body for veneration. In the midst of the crowd that surged forward to honor the saint by kissing one of his slipper-clad feet, Mrs Durrell, was separated from Gerald's 15-year-old sister. Fearful that her impetuous daughter might get carried away by the exuberance of the peasants, the mother whispered loudly to Gerald: "Tell Margo … not to kiss the foot … tell her just to kiss the air!" But, alas, it was too late and Margo was already crouched over the mummified slippers kissing them with an ardor that enchanted the locals.

Madam Durrell's horror at her daughter's embrace of a long since dead foot, saintly or not, was a sure-footed expression of her Anglican sensibility. The vignette reminded me of a visit several years ago to Norway and the University of Oslo. My amiable host, Benedicte Instaad, brought me to see many memorable sites, among them a very old Catholic church dedicated to St Olaf, the patron saint of Norway. Like Cardinal Newman, Instaad is a mid-life and 'conditional' convert to Catholicism and was still astounded by the display of St Olaf's femur in a large glass reliquary. The belief that the actual body and blood of Christ is consumed during Holy Communion was hard enough for this post-Lutheran to accept. But she drew the line when it came to venerating the bodily remains of saints even when national heroes. For that it takes a certain kind of socialization.

As a young child growing up in the post-war immigrant / refugee Jewish–Catholic Eastern European neighborhood of Williamsburg, Brooklyn, I collected and traded

relics as if they were bubblegum cards. The neighborhood was divided. Further from the docks lived refugees from the Holocaust, closer to the waterfront and to the "Sugar House" (Domino's Sugar Refinery) lived Catholic refugees from Poland, Lithuania and Czechoslovakia, escaping poverty, misery, ignorance, and guilt-ridden about parents and children left behind "in the old country." I never knew what sources of solace were available to the Holocaust survivors. Although we lived cheek by jowl, Catholics and Jews gave each other wide berth on those crowded streets. But "our kind" took comfort in the power of human relics First-class relics were blood and bone. My trophy was a relic of St Teresa Avila (I own it still!) a spot of what might have been stigmatic blood on a tiny piece of fabric, a gift from my aunt, a cloistered Carmelite nun. Tucked away in my mother's bureau drawers were beribboned relics, most of them second and third class, and not so very valuable or powerful. One might contain a fragment of Saint Therese of Lisieux's ("The Little Flower") Carmelite veil. Another, a piece of cloth that had touched a fragment of the "true cross" (of which there were a great many), or touched the ground in Jerusalem where Jesus had carried his cross to the crucifixion. Another relic was more awesome, the whole body of the saint. My classmates and I made the annual pilgrimage to Manhattan to view the mummified body of Mother Cabrini (see below), patron saint of European immigrants, whose remains were encased in a glass coffin under the altar, laid out like a sleeping beauty. I treasured another blood-dot-stained relic belonging, it was said, to a late-19th-century saint, Maria Goretti, the daughter of a poor Italian sharecroppers, who died at the age of 12 defending herself from the sexual advances of her next door neighbor. To a shy pre-menstrual girl of ten, the spot of blood (whether menstrual, stigmatic, or from a knife wound) was magical and protective amulet.

Relics were gifts, given to celebrate a First Confession ("Bless me Father for I have sinned"), a First Communion ("Lord, I am not worthy to receive thee"), a Confirmation ("With this slap may you have the courage of your patron saint, Therese of Lisieux. Defend the faith!"). Relics were tucked in the shirt of a son about to leave home for college in the South, into the duffel bag of a cousin stationed in Germany. Gifted, relics were powerful. Sold in religious shops or traded in grade school, they were profane, their value (and efficacy) in question.[13]

## Rationalized Bodies

Medical, forensic, and biotechnical sciences require rational and rationalized bodies – bodies that can be broken down into fragments, disarticulated, de-personalized, and rendered anonymous. Science needs bodies that are "disenchanted," in the Weberian sense, rendered into plain "things" and into reusable, recyclable raw materials. But bodies – whole and in parts – do not acquire these properties so easily, as I have tried to illustrate, and they do so in the face of strong cultural, "transcendental," and spiritual resistance, some of it coming from unanticipated quarters, such as the medical examiner, Michael Baden. Here, I am trying to illustrate the "liveliness" of dead bodies (Verdery 1999; Lederer 2008[14]) – at least for the for the living– and the continuities and discontinuities across space and time among bodies and body parts treated as indivisible, inalienable, integral containers and signifiers of human existence, of individual selves and persons. When dead bodies (or body parts) are harvested and retained

(without the knowledge or consent) for medical research, or as a scientific or museum specimen, or put into plastic bags, displayed in bottles, laid out on shelves, or packed inside industrial size freezers, anger, grief, recriminations, and demands for their return or repatriation often follow.

## AUTOPSY

### Forensic Pathology, University of Cape Town, South Africa

*Field Notes.* August 28th, l993, three days after the death of Amy Biehl, the American Fulbright Student caught up in a mob scene in which she was stoned to death amidst the cries of "One Settler, One Bullet."

The Pathology Department at the University of Cape Town is located in the bowels of the Medical School. The senior state pathologist, Professor Knoble, and his medical students look like they have been kept indoors for too long, like they have been pickled in brine. To get to Knoble's office I have to pass by rows of jars with their anatomical contents floating up to the top, sprouting fine threads of hair, like kindergarten potatoes. These are Knoble's collection of "disease objects," he tells me. A large oil painting hangs on the wall of the pathology faculty tea room: a large, naked, bloated looking pink man lies on his back passively awaiting the ministrations of the senior pathologist and his students.

Knoble explains in his thickly Afrikaner-accented English what I had come to learn about: the results of Knoble's autopsy of Amy Biehl. The young woman, he explains, did not die of the stab wounds inflicted, as the media had supposed, but of a single blow to her head from one of the rocks thrown by the agitated mob shouting "Death to the settler" and so forth. Her skull was bashed in, he added gratuitously. "Good thing" Knoble said, "as she probably didn't feel much pain after the blow, even though she got out of the car and tried to speak to the mob, tied to calm them down, poor woman. She'd be too disoriented to know what she was doing." One of Professor Knoble's protégés, Len Lerer, invites me to the morgue and though I took a rain check that day, I was there soon enough, following a second massacre, this one in a student pub that took four bodies and a dozen more seriously wounded. "If you want to know what South African violence is really about," Lerer cautioned, "count the deaths on trains, from shack burnings, other 'homicidal burnings' in the Black townships… the deaths that happen when nobody is looking."

This insight was confirmed at the Salt River Mortuary by Police Officer Fortuin who patiently explained the normal "operating procedures" during an extraordinary year, the year that would spell the end of the apartheid state. "As the body comes in it must go first to the hospital and from the hospital it comes here. Any information collected at the scene, by the ambulance for example, is given to us and all the valuables are given to us… We complete a form l83 with all the particulars. Anyone who comes through here we normally give him a DR (death report) number. To date this year (seven months into 1993) it is 4,275 deaths from unnatural causes. In an average week we receive plus or minus sixty bodies. 4,275 this year is a lot more than we received last year. At the end of last year we had 5,685 in all. This year it will be much higher. Most of the bodies we get are of Blacks. The main problem we have here is identification,

because most of them come originally from the homelands and their bodies sometimes lay here for months. It is a struggle to get the people identified… The main thing is the forms that must be completed. We normally take fingerprints on each body and we take photos and we publish information in the papers to see if we can get an identification. We keep bodies for up to three months. You've got to wait for the fingerprint report that comes from Pretoria. You can't bury a body without it."

"How many people were unidentified in the last year?"

"I don't know. I would have to get that figure for you."

When Sergeant Fortuin leaves the room I pore over one of the seven Death Registry Books for l993 that the sergeant left out on the table. An assistant police officer answers my questions with the tape recorder still on:

"What can we learn from here about sex, age, race distribution?"

"There are so many black men dying, especially between the ages of l5 and 30. 60 to 70 percent of the people we receive here are young black men from the townships in Cape Town."

"Where is the cause of death listed?"

"This [column] here is what the police write down immediately from what they get from the ambulance drivers and whoever else was at the scene of the death. And this [column] is where they write down the official cause of death once the police get the pathologist's report… Some of the people who write these things down from the pathologist's report might be untrained, might not even know what they are transcribing from the pathologist's report so that 'cardiac failure' might be recorded as something totally different just because the police cannot read the pathologist's handwriting and he writes down something totally different as he understands it and reads it."

Officer Fortuin returns and corrects the younger officer: "The main thing is that we always find out the cause of death. For every autopsy we do here with an unknown body we fill out a form and do a good description of the body, all the stuff on the body, all the marks, the teeth, anything distinctive. And then we wait and see."

I called the number several times that was published in the *Argus* newspaper to request information on a missing body. It was an answering machine. No one ever returned my calls. "That's because there is no-one there," Len Lerer told me. "There is no bureau of missing persons. There are no files."

## Autopsy to Dissection: Andrew Sitshetshe's Eyes

> *"I believe that even though my patients are the dead people – I always say to students behind every dead person is a family and a relative, and that we need to look at a holistic approach even in forensic medicine. And I believe we can do, we should do more about the question of grief and bereavement."*
>
> (Deon Knoble, Forensic Pathologist, Salt River (Police) Mortuary, 1997)

During the worst phases of political oppression under apartheid a great many physicians, district surgeons, and state pathologists working with police at the state-run mortuaries collaborated in covering up in their autopsy reports the police actions that resulted in deaths and body mutilations of hundreds of "suspected terrorists" and political prisoners. For these reasons, the public morgue was a place of horror and suspicion for township people.

On Saturday evening, August 1992, 17-year-old Andrew Sikhosonke Sitshetshe had gone to a men's hostel to collect payment for a radio he had repaired for a resident of the hostel. He was caught in the line of fire of members of the township's well-known Balaclava Gang. Andrew was badly wounded and was taken to the Guguletu police station. His mother, Rosemary, followed him to the police station where she found her son lying on the floor with a bleeding chest wound. She identified herself and her son to the police officers. By the time the ambulance arrived, Andrew was unconscious. The ambulance refused to allow Rosemary to accompany her son's body and she "lost" track of him over the next three miserable days and nights. She called every hospital in Cape Town and surrounding suburbs. Finally, the police contacted Rosemary and told her that she could claim her son's body the next morning at the police mortuary at Salt River.

When Andrew's parents arrived at the mortuary officials said the body of their son was not yet ready for viewing. They were finally allowed to see the body at 3 p.m. that afternoon. Rosemary Sitshetshe was shocked at the state of her son's body, laid out, bloody, and eviscerated on top of the Sunday newspaper comics. She insisted that her son was still alive when he was carried away to the morgue. She told me: "I noticed that the blanket covering the body was full of blood; and I saw that he had two deep holes on the sides of his forehead and you could easily see the bone. His face was in bad condition. And I could see that something was wrong with his eyes… I started to question the people in charge and they said nothing had happened."

Rosemary returned with an independent ANC forensic pathologist who examined the body and determined that Andrew's eyes were surgically removed and filled with cotton wool and pink plastic cups. The organs inside Andrew's body had all been severed and it could not be determined whether they were his or belonged to another unfortunate corpse. The family confronted the senior pathologist who said that he believed the body was unidentified. It arrived without any written notice indicating that the deceased was *not* an eye donor, and so he allowed his assistants to remove Andrew's eyes which were given to the Director of a private Foundation, the Eye Bank Foundation of South Africa in Mowbray, a few streets from Professor Knoble's university offices. "Why didn't you call us?" The pathologist explained that it was very late at night and he didn't want to wake them, even though the family had been awake and sick with grief every night since Andrew was taken away.

Unable to rest, Rosemary went to the Eye Bank to confront the director who told the mother that her son's corneas had been "shaved" and given to two eye patients. She refused to return what was left of his Andrew's eyes for burial with his body. Andrew was buried without his eyes and possibly with solid organs that were not his own.

"Although my son is buried," Rosemary testified before the Human Rights Violations committee of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission five years later (1997), "is it good that his flesh is here, there, and everywhere, that part and parcel of his body are floating around?… I stand up and condemn this act in the strongest terms and those who are guilty must be punished… Must we be stripped of every comfort as well as our dignity?… How could the medical doctor decide or know what was a priority for us?" Leslie London, a professor of public health at the University of Cape Town, supported Sitshetshe's testimony saying that "these were more than events involving a few bad apples… These abuses arose in a political context in

which the entire fabric of the health sector was permeated by apartheid, and in which human rights were profoundly devalued."

In the course of my investigations in South Africa (1993–1998) I learned that cornea, heart valves, bone, and other human tissues and body parts were routinely harvested by state pathologists and other mortuary staff and distributed to surgical and medical units without the knowledge or consent of family members. The "donor" bodies, most of them victims of police and township violence, were handled by state pathologists attached to public mortuaries controlled by the police. One academic scientist who benefited from receipt of organs and tissues that he used in his research spoke of his uneasiness over the informal practice of "presumed consent." A loophole in the 1983 Organ and Tissue Act allowed the "appropriate" officials to remove "needed" organs and tissues without consent when "reasonable attempts" to locate the potential donor's next of kin had failed. Since eyes and heart valves need to be removed within hours of death and given the difficulty of locating families living in distant townships and squatter settlements without adequate transportation and communication systems, some doctors and coroners use their authority to harvest the prized organs without giving much thought to the feelings of the next of kin. They justify their actions as motivated by the desire to "save lives." In return, the organ and tissue providers gain the gratitude, professional friendship, and the respect of the prestigious research and transplant teams who owe them favors in return. Some excess cornea, heart valves and other tissues are distributed domestically and internationally. The permissible fees for processing the tissues are income and the possibility of gratuities and honoraria paid on the side to cooperating mortuary staff could not be discounted. I knew for a fact that small gratuities were paid to medical students for the transfer of tissues and eyeballs to the banks that requested them and that transplant coordinators were given honoraria for carrying organs in Styrofoam containers to local airports, or accompanying the organs on flight, as needed.

The Sitshetshe case was treated by the TRC as a human rights violation and represented a class of such violations that were still widespread in the South Africa through the end of the 1990s. These abuses may have contributed to the decision of the health ministry to transfer public support from tertiary medicine to primary care, a move not without its own contradictions. Meanwhile, organ transplantation, once the pride of the apartheid regime, was rapidly privatized. The famous academic hospitals and research centers where heart and other organ transplants were first developed went into decline as relatively autonomous, private, for-profit hospitals and hospital corporations like Netcare, [15] opened transplants to foreign "transplant tourists" with cash, leading to transplant trafficking schemes that involved paid donors from Brazil, Moldova, Romania, and Russia to service Israeli patients outsourced by their own Ministry of Health (Scheper-Hughes 2008; n.d.).

## Bodies for Autopsy, Bodies for Organs

Ruth Richardson describes the "fearful symmetry" between the medical production of bodies for dissection and of bodies for organ harvesting for transplant. In each case "once the need was recognized, a supply was obtained; and once a supply was obtained, it always fell short of demand" (Richardson 2000: 412). This dynamic, set into place in the 17th century (Wise 2004) and continues to the present day. The expansion of

new patient populations and the invented needs and artificial scarcities that follow in their wake is a case in point. Continuous throughout these transactions across time and space is the division of society into two populations, the medically included and the medically excluded, those who lack the ability to draw on the beauty, strength, reproductive, sexual, or anatomical power of the other.

There have been many "scandals" in recent decades concerning the illicit removal and retention of human body parts at academic hospitals and police mortuaries in Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, the United States (including the University California, Irvine) and Israel. Under "normal" circumstances, the culprit is an individual, his behavior is eventually discovered with the assistance of inside whistle-blowers, and the agent faces criminal charges. More rarely (Argentina during the dirty war, Brazil during the military regime, and Israel beginning with the first Intifada)[16] the illicit harvesting is part of a covert military policy. A scandal of immense proportion broke out in the UK in March 2000 when it was revealed that a Dutch pathologist who had been employed between 1988 and 1995 at one of Britain's most revered and trusted children's hospitals, the Alder Hey Hospital in Liverpool, had been routinely stripping the bodies of dead child during post mortems and removing their hearts, brains, eyes and other organs and tissues without the knowledge or consent of their parents. Thousands of organs were found in the hospital's basement storage rooms in jars or simply stacked on shelves. Most had not been used for any medical, scientific, or research purpose. They were simply part of Dr Van Velzen's private "collections." In addition to 2,000 hearts and brains, police found the head of an 11-year-old boy, and some 1,500 fetuses or stillbirths. One specimen, a 9-week-old fetus, was labeled by the pathologist: "Inflated Monster. Humpty Dumpty." In his defense of Van Velzen, the chief medical examiner for the province referred to the pathologist as a brilliant scientist and not the "ogre going into a dark room at night with a candle" as the media portrayed him. He was simply misguided, retaining organs while saying to himself, "I'm going to keep this and I'm going to keep that because I can develop this or that kind of research project, although apparently he never got around to it."[17]

The Alder Hey scandal led to a global investigation of autopsy and dissection in the U.K. by the British Department of Health. The resulting 500-page report, "Human Bodies, Human Choices,"[18] found that more than 100,000 organs removed during autopsies in British hospitals had been retained (with knowledge or consent) between 1970 and 1999 (among them 23,000 brains, 9,400 hearts, and 6,900 lungs) and stored in 25 public hospitals and medical schools in the U.K. Some institutions, including Birmingham's Children's Hospital and London's Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, had sold live tissue removed from children during surgery to pharmaceutical companies for research and drug production.

The commodification of the body and body parts is an old story in the history of medical science (Foucault 1973), but the temptations to those in charge of the handling of dead bodies have been magnified in recent decades by the enormous expansion of possibilities through advances in biotechnology, transplant surgery, genetic medicine, genomics and personalized medicine in tandem with the speed at which patients, technologies, capital, bodies, and organs, tissues, genetic information, move across the globe. As Ruth Richardson noted the "scarcity" of organs and tissues today is continuous with earlier discourses on the need and desire and "scarcity" of bodies and body parts for religious edification, healing, dissection, the arts, medical experimentation, and

clinical trials. What is perhaps a new phenomenon is the application of human rights discourses to the old problem of grave-robbers and body brokers to what was previously seen as a religious problem, a sacrilege, a desecration of what belonged to God. Today, legal claims are launched by the families of the "desecrated" demanding retribution and repatriation. Class action suits emerging from the Alder Hey Hospital scandal led to the return and reburial of dead children's retained organs, tissues and body parts and the dismantling of the pathologist's collections as a medical pathology rather than as a bizarre and legitimate practice of scientific inquiry.

## Cooke's Bones[19]

> *"I think it is good and proper that in 1976 we should celebrate what is best in the American past. But we should remember that our history, like that of all nations, is sometimes fine and sometimes foul. The important thing is to know which is which."*
>
> (Alistair Cooke's 1974 Address before the U.S. House of Representatives)

For more than half a century the dapper, erudite and mannerly reporter, Alistair Cooke, delivered his weekly broadcast to the English-speaking world, *Letter from America*, for BBC radio. One of the most insightful interpreters of American society since Alexis de Tocqueville, Cooke's fifteen-minute broadcasts, as dependable as Tristram Shandy's father winding the clock on the first Sunday of every month, diagnosed the strengths and weaknesses of the difficult nation he adopted as his second home.

Over the years Alistair Cooke found many things about which to cry foul, and he often had to struggle to maintain his characteristic optimism. In an interview celebrating the 3,000th edition of his "Letter from America" he nailed the bimodal personality of the nation: "In America the race is on between its decadence and its vitality, and it has lots of both." [20]

In the U.S. Alistair Cooke was better known as the polite man with the resonant voice sitting in a comfortable wing-backed chair with a book on his lap. Cooke introduced "high brow" TV into middle American living rooms every Sunday evening before the latest installment of the ever popular "Masterpiece Theatre." To his faithful American viewers, Alistair was a British "Mr Rogers" whose courtly manners and patrician style (despite his working-class origins) they found both charming and just faintly ridiculous, but always reassuring. At the announcement of Cooke's death at home in Manhattan on March 30, 2004 Americans grieved as much as the British for the end of an era (the 20th century) and of a personable and intimate sort of radio and TV journalism, born of a vast knowledge, keen intelligence, discretion, and, above all, civility. But a final installment and woebegotten episode of Cooke's life in America was still in the making.

Just after Christmas, 2005, Susan Cooke Kittredge, a bespectacled, middle-aged Episcopal priest, mother of five, and pastor of a little white wooden church in rural Vermont, the "Old Meeting House," received a phone call that changed her life. It was from a detective with the Brooklyn Attorney General's office and he wanted to know if Reverend Kittredge had heard anything about a police investigation of corruption at several New York City funeral homes, including the one that had handled the body of her father. No, she'd heard nothing about the grisly traffic in human

body parts taken from several hundred dead bodies by a ring of body brokers posing as kindly undertakers and tissue bank operators. One of the several New York City funeral parlors police were investigating was the same "New York Mortuary Services Inc." that Susan had found online and had chosen because it was conveniently located and inexpensive. At 95 and mortally ill with lung cancer, Alistair knew that his final act was near and requested a modest, unceremonious disposal of his remains through cremation. When Susan enquired about just where this was to take place, her father shrugged his shoulders and said, with a smile, "Surprise me!"

The funeral company responded immediately to Susan's call and sent a van to pick up the body from Cooke's elegant home on Fifth Avenue. Two days later Kittredge received the ashes. Peeking into container she noticed that they looked different, a powdery substance rather than splinters of bone, and a stray piece of metal had somehow found its way into the packet. When the director of the funeral parlor failed to return her calls, she put the matter aside. Why dwell on it. She had fulfilled her duty and now she had to resign herself to her loss.

Now, more than a year later, Kittredge learned that police were busy tracing the distribution of her father's and several hundred other victims' body parts to a dozen murky tissue and bone "processing plants" in the New York area. Cooke's bones had sold for more than $7,000 after they fell into the hands of the owner of a New Jersey company called Biomedical Tissue Services or BTS. The detective cleared his throat to ask if, by any chance, her late father was *the* Alistair Cooke of "Masterpiece Theatre." Yes, he was, she replied sadly.

The detective described the gruesome job of opening and verifying the contents of coffins, and the discovery of bodies missing skin, bone, tendons, solid organs, and other body parts. Plumber's pipes were used to replace bones that were removed; sawdust filled empty abdominal cavities. But grave robbing was just the half of it. The other half was malignant fraud and deception. Cooke's name was intentionally misspelled, his social security number was bogus, the next of kin who supposedly gave consent was made up. Worse, her father's age was reduced by ten years, and his morbid condition, lung cancer that had metastasized to his bones, was expunged from his record. The documents filled out by BTS listed the "donor" as an 85-year-old man who had died of a heart attack. Metastasized cancer would have rendered his bones and tissues ineligible and unsafe for medical use. In the parlance of the body trade, Cooke's bones were "disarticulated," divided, fragmented, and some of them pulverized so that they could be sold and used in various orthopedic procedures, transplants, and oral surgeries, possibly endangering the lives of the recipients.

*"They have pierced my hands and my feet"*

(Psalm 22)

Behind the scheme was the owner of Biomedical Tissue Services Ltd, Michael Mastromarino, a former Fifth Avenue dentist and author of a book on dental implants (made from pulverized human bone). After being stripped of his medical license in 2001 following malpractice complaints linked to his drug addiction to morphine, Mastromarino teamed up with Joseph Nicelli, a NYC funeral director who freelanced as an "on call" embalmer for several New York funeral homes. Together, they founded a tissue bank, Biomedical Tissue Services in 2002. Although New York State is one of the few states to regulate tissue banking, there is no national registry

of tissue banks and no national tracking of human tissues bought, sold, packaged and distributed (sometimes in Fed Ex packets) throughout the USA, not to mention internationally. Throughout most of its recent history, the United States tissue industry has been self-regulated by a professional organization, the American Association of Tissue Banks (AATB). Beauticians, manicurists, and cosmetologists are licensed throughout the United States, but just about anyone can ship a human body, whole or in disarticulated parts, in private refrigerated trucks. As in any other organic industry, freshness counts. An FDA official once commented that it was in fact "easier to ship a crate of human heads than a crate of chickens across state borders in the United States."

In addition to his work as an embalmer, Nicelli also had interests in real estate, poultry, corpse transport, and funeral homes. The modus operandi of Nicelli and Mastromarino was to visit local funeral parlors and offer $1,000 for access to each new corpse, which they treated to a process of human strip mining. "There is not much difference between cutting up a chicken and cutting up a human corpse," a key informant explained. After removing the salable tissues, organs, and bones Mastromarino and Nicelli would leave the funeral director to handle the "reconstructive work" necessary to make the body "presentable" for the family and the funeral. Cremation made the task much easier, and bodies marked for cremation were particularly vulnerable to body theft. The stolen body parts were then sold to various biotech firms, including Regeneration Technologies, Inc (RTI), a large, innovative firm in Alachua, Florida that processes human tissues, including bone, cartilage, tendon, ligament, and cardiovascular tissue, for use as surgical implants to repair bone and other tissue defects, musculoskeletal reconstruction, fracture repair, periodontal repair, urinary incontinence and heart valve disorders. RTI distributes its products nationally and globally.

These and other revelations made Reverend Kittredge sick at heart. Her professionally disciplined sense of charity made her more mindful of the threat her father's cancer-ridden bones posed to unwary surgical patients than about her own sense of loss and betrayal. In her first sermon to her congregation following the revelations, Reverend Cooke expressed empathy for the recipients of her father's (and other donors') diseased tissues who must now be at war with their own bodies, thinking "how do I get this [bad stuff] out of me?" As a priest she was comfortable with death and in her work with bereaved parishioners she tried to have them see the corpse as an evacuated object. The "essence" of the person was gone, she counseled, having moved on to a new spiritual plane of experience. "I tell them that the person has gone to God," though where that was exactly she could not say. Now, Kittredge's own faith was sorely challenged by the cruel fate that had befallen the body of her father. The cruelest revelation was that her father's legs had been crudely sawed off by the Brooklyn body brokers of BTS.

In an emotionally searing editorial in the *New York Times* (Sunday, March 5, 2006, 15) Kittredge blamed our alienation from death for creating the circumstances exploited by body vultures. Our societal values put us at odds with death, made us want to shun death, to run away from it, to put "it" in a box and nail it firmly shut. Body theft would not be possible if relatives and loved ones of the dying stayed close to the body, sat vigil with it, and supervised preparations for burial or cremation. While rationally in control of the situation by day, at night she was haunted by the

ghost-like presence of her father, in life a large, dignified, and imposing figure, now, an apparition standing silently before her and "truncated" from the waist down. At last she understood what "haunting" meant; for try as she might, she could not dismiss the ghostly visitor. How could she put his body aside, when it had gone missing and all she had left were its silent recriminations. She told her congregation: "For the last three weeks I have lived with my father's cadaver pressed against my cheek. It has all been about the body, that still, empty vessel. It's hard to get beyond the body when the body is the story."[21]

On Easter Sunday, April 26, 2006, Reverend Cooke Kittredge was made to reflect and speak on the Resurrection, a theme that now felt like a slap in the face or "a sick joke." She structured her homily around the "fear and trembling" Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bearing spices to anoint Jesus's body, experienced on finding an empty tomb. The beloved body "was gone, vanished, stolen perhaps."[22] You can imagine, she told the congregation, "where I am going with this." But unlike the female apostles, who were reassured by an angel that the body they were seeking was safe, as Jesus had risen from the dead, Susan had to face the reality of a body that had actually been stolen and to which "terrible things were done, some parts sold for a lot of money, other parts thrown in the trash."

## Bio-Piracy, Dissection and Traffic in Bodies

*"Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather"*

(Matthew 24: 28)

I have tried to show thus far that there are many genealogies to consider with respect to the handling of the dead body, from the collection, exchange, and veneration of Egyptian mummies to medieval Christian relics of the saints to the activities of the barbers and surgeons in search of corpses for dissection, the "Resurrection Men" of the 17th century onward who trawled graveyards in search of "things" (bodies) that they sold to surgeons for use in medical school classes (Wise 2004). While the dominant religious perspective of medieval England centered on the doctrine of bodily resurrection, the English Restoration beginning in 1660 shifted religious perspectives towards the soul and the afterlife. The Restoration tried to sweep away the popular cult of saints, relics, denied the existence of Purgatory, and imagined a more spiritual afterlife in which the fate of the material body was less significant. This shift led to some confusion about the permissible uses of the dead body, as a finite thing, for dissection. Ruth Richardson (2000) analyses the implications of the passage of the English Anatomy Act (1832) which evolved from the 1752 Murder Act, which had linked dissection with the penal code and with the punishment of criminals, paupers and other social marginals. The function of the barber-surgeons in the 18th century was to destroy the corpse altogether. Katherine Park (1995), however, argues that dead bodies and dissection had very different meanings in Italy where the dead body was perceived as "emptied of its selfhood" and personhood. There was, she argues, no taboo on Italian surgeons opening up the bodies of corpses, although there was still a stigma surrounding public dissection and display which were seen as violations of

personal dignity and family honor. Moreover, to devout Christians the soul could not be at peace unless the body was at peace, an idea that was difficult to reconcile with medical dissection; these sentiments led to popular resistance to the medical practice of dissection culminating with the famous Tyburn riots (Linebaugh 1975). The riots against medical grave robbers, like the Protestant revulsion with the cult of relics, eventually produced medical reforms and new laws and regulations in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries to interrupt, or at least to inconvenience, the traffic in dead bodies, whether of executed prisoners in some times and places or of paupers, unidentified or unclaimed bodies in other times and places, as fair game to serve the needs of medical education and research.

Pushing against these new reformist movements is the power of the international tissue banking industry. Between three and five million bone and tissue transplants take place each year, the largest number in the U.S. The demand for bone and tissue transplants has grown exponentially. Skin is needed for wounds and burns, but also for plastic surgeries and cosmetic implants. Heart valves are used to repair heart defects. Bone, cartilage, and tendons are used in hip and knee replacements, and in ankle surgeries. Pulverized bone is used in orthodontic procedures. 12,000 square feet of human skin was recovered by American tissue banks in 2002; in 2003 19,000 square feet of skin was procured, sold, and used (Cheney 2006). In some states, like California, as little as 30 percent of the skin procured and removed from deceased donors is used to relieve the suffering of burn patients; most of the skin taken is sold to private companies for commercial uses (Katches et al. 2000).[23]

Whole bodies and torsos are in great demand for testing new products and for the training of surgeons in the use of new medical devices developed and promoted by private companies who hold expensive seminars in icy-cold, air-conditioned ballrooms of Florida hotels where surgeons can have hands-on experience with real bodies. As with tissues, the demand for whole bodies has outstripped the supply available through conventional means. Consequently, financial incentives are sometimes offered to directors of "Willed Body Programs" at prestigious medical schools throughout the United States. Unfortunately, it doesn't take much for these under-supervised programs to slide into commercialized body shops, as recent cases at the University of California, Irvine,[24] followed by UCLA,[25] indicate (Orange County Register 2009).

If there are organs and tissue "scarcities" in the "wealthy" world there are plenty of "surplus" tissues (and supernumerary organs) for sale in the poorer nations that are being recycled internationally. Tissues (especially cornea) that are post-dated or of too poor quality for use in the United States are often sold or "gifted" abroad, although "dumping" is the term used by private eye banks in Brazil who have been the recipient of American largesse. Conversely, tissues removed in developing countries without the capacity to make use of them are sold abroad. Often, deals are cut between individual parties with little government interference. Over the past twelve years I have uncovered several active international circuits of illicit tissue trade operating behind vague laws and regulations that never anticipated the growth of extensive global markets in human tissues.

In 1997 the director of an academic biomedical research unit in South Africa showed me official documents allowing the transfer of "excess" human heart valves

taken from bodies unclaimed in the first 24 hours at the local police mortuary. These were packaged and shipped for allowable "handling costs" to private medical centers in Germany and Austria. These fees, a cover for sales, helped support the unit's research program in the face of austerities and the downsizing of medical research facilities in the new South Africa. Although one can understand the frustration of the cash-strapped South African research scientists, the leeway afforded to them by the law contributed to corruption at organs and tissue banks in the country.

Some years ago (2002) I contacted the South African Ministry of Health and then, when I received no reply, I reported directly to the Dean of the Medical School in Pretoria a scheme originating at the National Tissue Bank at the University of Pretoria. The scheme involved shipments of human tendons by the director of the tissue bank, a member of the medical school faculty, to an independent businessman in Tampa, Florida who paid $200 for each tendon. The tendons shipped in crates were received by Philip Heitlinger in the "free trade" zone of the Tampa international airport before passing through US immigration and customs. They were re-packaged as American products and reshipped to South Korea and elsewhere. At least one "stray" shipment, however, landed in Atlanta, Georgia, where it was confiscated by customs officials who notified local FDA (Food and Drug Agency) officials. Federal detectives raided the warehouse of Heitlinger in Tampa. He was detained and questioned by police. A complaint was filed with the District Attorney, but the case was dropped and Heitlinger was released.

The tendons were sold internationally to private medical firms and biotech companies for as much as $1,200 each, generating a tidy profit for every party concerned, except for the families in South Africa whose dead relations served as anonymous donors.

The head of the Pretoria National Tissue Bank (name withheld) wrote me a formal response on letterhead paper dated August 1, 2002 in which he contested my allegations. He wrote:

> The National Tissue Bank functions legally in accordance with the Human Tissue Act of 1983 in South Africa and we are collaborating with the Authorities to update their Tissue Act for the year 2003.The mission of the National Tissue Bank in Pretoria is to supply allograft tissue to the entire country for an affordable price. Therefore we have kept our expenses and even our packaging such that we would not incur unnecessary expenses. In South Africa we do not have a market for Achilles Tendons. I was approach by the American businessman from Mysha Medical, Mr Phillip Heitlinger, and asked whether I would be prepared to send tissue to the US for shipment to South Korea. I am well acquainted with the situation in South Korea since I am also part of the International Atomic Energy Agency's workgroup on International Standards on tissue banks… I am well aware of the fact that due to cultural obstructions it is very difficult for South Korean surgeons to obtain allografts from their own population. I therefore consented that allografts being sent on a limited basis via the US to surgeons in South Korea. (Or so I was made to believe).

The now ex-head of the tissue bank says he has nothing more to do with tissues. Heitlinger has also given up on the tissue business, which he now describes as a "royal pain in the neck, and not even lucrative. I could hardly make ends meet." The FDA

investigator assigned to the case retired from his government job and cannot speak on the handling of the case because of a signed confidentiality agreement.[26]

### Tissues without Passports

Where once the buying and selling human tissues and body parts evoked shock and revulsion, today global markets in human tissues and organs are a fait accompli. During a World Health Organization (WHO) advisory consultancy on "Ethics, Access and Safety in Tissue and Organ Transplant" the director of a private eye bank in Africa defended the "necessary" commercialization and privatization of tissue banks in the developing world. In the absence of government-subsidized tissue banking, the only recourse in poorer countries was through international tissue trading / selling. Bone, organs and tissues not being utilized locally could be exported through informal agreements to the North where they are in great demand. In exchange, the donor institutions could receive a steady supply of scarce corneas (World Health Organization 2003). Such informal global networking and trade in tissues ignores the cruel realities of such practices for vulnerable donor communities.

Tissue banking remains a largely unregulated, privatized, and transnational industry. Tissues enter and leave nations, including the United States, without "visas" or "passports." The WHO advisory panel, while not concerned with the sensibilities of grieving family members or local cultural "taboos" regarding the treatment of the dead body, was extremely concerned about the medical safety issues of unregulated tissue procurement, distribution and sales. The late Edna Bloom, representing the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, at the WHO meeting, referred to the situation as "dire" and as "a ticking time bomb waiting to explode." The final WHO report (2003) adopted the term "tissues without passports" to refer to the dangers of a seemingly uncontrollable free trade or global free-for-all, in human tissues.

## Repatriation

I began this chapter with a reflection on the liveliness of dead bodies and their tendency to pop up like gargoyles when we least expect them. Seventy years after Ishi's brain was removed by his medical caretaker, Dr Saxton Pope, at the University of California Medical Center, a group of Maidu Indians from Oroville appeared at the Anthropology Department at U.C. Berkeley asking for assistance in repatriating the remains of "grandfather" Ishi. This visit was an instance of what I am calling the return of the repressed.

On August 29, 1911, the last living member of the Yahi Mill Creek band, the man that Alfred Kroeber would later call "Ishi" (the Yahi word for "human"), appeared in Oroville, California. Possibly driven by hunger, the Indian emerged from hiding in the foothills of Mount Lassen and was discovered cowering in the corner of a slaughterhouse. He was held at the local jail until Alfred Kroeber and a young linguist, Tom Waterman, arrived and identified him as a Yahi Indian. Although cold, frightened and hungry, Ishi refused to accept food or water. In the first photo taken just hours after his capture Ishi seems startled and is in a state of advanced emaciation. His hair is clipped or singed close to his head in a traditional sign of Yahi mourning. His cheeks

cling fast to the bones and accentuate his deep-set eyes. The photo shows a man of intelligence and of deep sorrow.

After Ishi's "rescue" by Kroeber, he lived out his final years (1911–1915) as a salaried assistant janitor, key informant and "living specimen" at the Museum of Anthropology at the University of California, then located in San Francisco near the medical school. Ishi was given his own private quarters, but his room was located next to a large collection of human skulls and bones that depressed him greatly. Nonetheless, Ishi conveyed to his anthropological and medical "guardians" his desire to remain at the museum rather than face uncertainty elsewhere. He could not go home: his natal territory was occupied by the ghosts and spirits of his kin who had not died a peaceful death nor been given a proper funeral.

During the period that Ishi lived among whites (doctors and anthropologists), he served as a willing informant to Kroeber and other local and visiting anthropologists, including Edward Sapir, whom Waterman accused of overworking Ishi, already weak from illness. Like other "first contact" peoples, Ishi contracted tuberculosis, an urban disease, although his condition was not diagnosed until the final weeks of his life. Kroeber feared this outcome, as his first wife, Henriette, was felled by the same disease two years after Ishi arrived at the Museum. Ishi succumbed in March 1916 while Kroeber was away in New York City on sabbatical leave.

Ishi has been described as northern California's Anne Frank. Cruelly hunted, his group was reduced to five, then to three, and finally to one when Ishi was discovered and captured. Some local Indians speculate that Ishi may have been in search of refuge at the nearby Feather River (Maidu Indian) *rancheria*. The Maidu were known to offer sanctuary to escaping Yahi. "Ishi wasn't crazy," Art Angle, then head of the Butte County Native American Cultural Committee in Oroville, told me. "He knew where he was headed." But, betrayed by barking guard dogs, Ishi fell into the hands of whites instead. One Pit River man thought that Ishi had perhaps lost his bearings. "Too many years alone," others said. "Ishi didn't really trust anyone – white or Indian."

Although Ishi told fragments of his story to Alfred Kroeber, who recorded these by hand and captured Ishi's rendition of Yahi myths, origin stories, and folktales on primitive wax cylinders, many of which have since melted, Ishi refused to talk about the death of his relatives and his last years of solitary hiding around Deer Creek. Despite Ishi's extreme physical and psychological vulnerability and his fear of crowds, Kroeber allowed Ishi to perform as a living exhibit at the Museum of Anthropology and at the San Francisco Panama-Pacific Trade Exhibition. By the time Kroeber left for a sabbatical year in New York City in 1915 he suspected that Ishi was gravely ill and that this might be his final leave-taking. His worst fears were confirmed by a letter from Dr Saxton Pope informing Kroeber that Ishi was dying. Kroeber sent urgent telegrams demanding timely postings on his friend's deteriorating condition. He also demanded that Ishi's body be treated respectfully and according to the Indian's request to be cremated intact. "If there is any talk about the interests of science," Kroeber wrote to Gifford on 24 March 1916, "say for me that science can go to hell." But with Kroeber far away, a standard autopsy was performed on Ishi's body during which his brain was removed "for science."

By the time Kroeber returned to Berkeley his ire had cooled considerably. He even arranged for Ishi's brain to be packaged and shipped to the Smithsonian and to the

care of Ales Hrdlicka, a physical anthropologist of the "old school," dedicated to collecting and measuring brain "specimens" from various orders of primates and human "exotics." Why Kroeber made such a decision can only be based on speculation. Perhaps he thought that it was too late for "sentimental" reservations. Ishi was dead and the damage to his body was irreversible. Or perhaps Kroeber was suffering from a disordered sense of grieving for his dead wife and his "best friend," both of whom were felled by the same disease.

The final chapter of this story opened in the spring of 1999 with the rediscovery of Ishi's brain housed in a warehouse of the Smithsonian Institution. Berkeley anthropologists differed in their opinions of what, if anything, should be said or done. Some were embarrassed by the initial denials by the Hearst Museum of Anthropology and the University of California administration that the brain had ever been removed. An official letter from the university administration to Art Angle stated: "There is no historical support for the idea that his brain was maintained as a scientific specimen." Following the official news release indicating that Ishi's brain had, indeed, been traced to the Smithsonian, a departmental meeting was held and a proposed statement was debated, many times revised, and finally accepted as the collective response of the Department of Anthropology at Berkeley. While falling short of the apology to Northern California Indians that a majority of the faculty had signed in an earlier draft, the final unanimous statement read:

> The recent recovery of a famous California Indian's brain from a Smithsonian warehouse has led the Department of Anthropology at the University of California Berkeley to revisit and reflect on a troubling chapter of our history. Ishi, whose family and cultural group, the Yahi Indians, were murdered as part of the genocide that characterized the influx of western settlers to California, lived out his last years at the original museum of anthropology at the University of California. He served as an informant to one of our department's founding members, Alfred Kroeber, as well as to other local and visiting anthropologists. The nature of the relationships between Ishi and the anthropologists and linguists who worked with him for some five years at the museum were complex and contradictory. Despite Kroeber's lifelong devotion to California Indians and his friendship with Ishi, he failed in his efforts to honor Ishi's wishes not to be autopsied and he inexplicably arranged for Ishi's brain to be shipped to and to be curated at the Smithsonian. We acknowledge our department's role in what happened to Ishi, a man who had already lost all that was dear to him. We strongly urge that the process of returning Ishi's brain to appropriate Native American representatives be speedily accomplished. We are considering various ways to pay honor and respect to Ishi's memory. We regard public participation as a necessary component of these discussions and in particular we invite the peoples of Native California to instruct us in how we may better serve the needs of their communities through our research-related activities. Perhaps, working together, we can ensure that the next millennium will represent a new era in the relationship between indigenous peoples, anthropologists, and the public.

Ishi's brain was returned to the Pit-River Indians and buried somewhere in the thick woodlands of Mount Lassen, home of the ancient Yahi Indians before the period of the Great Confinement, when they were hunted and forced to hide in small groups. But repatriation continues to haunt the Pheobe Hearst Museum as other tribal groups have come and made requests for the return of anatomical "specimens" and ceremonial and sacred objects linked to life-cycle rituals. They don't often, if ever, return with

what they have come to request. In March 2008 a delegation of Tlingit Indians from Alaska including four tribal elders – Harold Jacobs, Herman Davis, George Ramos and Bob Sam, all Tlingit speakers – and three younger men in training to assume clan leadership – Kelly Johnson, J. P. Buller, Justin Henricks – asked to see and to have time alone with a few dozen of the several hundred Tlingit sacred objects entombed in the bowels of the Phoebe Hearst Museum, a prelude to what will be a long, very long, process of repatriation. The delegation was warned by the museum staff to put on tight surgical rubber gloves (provided by the museum) that barely fit their hands to prevent direct contact with the DDT, arsenic and other toxic preservatives that were coated on the artifacts to preserve them. Oddly, however, the curators wore no gloves and freely touched the objects.

The leader of the team, Harold Jacobs, a fierce-looking, massively built middle-aged man with dark black eyes that seemed to bore a hole through your skull, was a man of so few words that he approached clinical mutism. When asked by the staff on the first day of the visit what he wanted to accomplish, what his goals were, Harold opened and closed his mouth and then clamped his large, four-square hands over his mouth. He seemed to transmogrify himself into a wooden totem. It was a totemic, possibly shamanic, moment. After a long purification rite outside the door of the museum archives, the team entered and confronted a long examining table – reminiscent of medical tables used for autopsy by medical students. On the table' arrayed in a row, were carved wooden masks, shaman rattles, wooden helmets, armors, all manner of wood carvings – of stylized salmon eating men, a nearly life-sized carved wooden figure of a man or a woman laid on his / her back with feet and arms coiled back – as if in labor – and partly covered by animal pelt. Human turning into beaver, I was later told.

Harold looked even more fierce than he had during the first meeting and he swept his arms here and there, teeth clenched, demanding that certain objects be removed from sight immediately. (They were too sacred to be displayed, Harold told me later.)

The next evening I hosted a welcome buffet dinner for the Tlingit delegation. Following dinner, drums and headdresses appeared. Heartfelt singing began and the elders installed the two youngsters as future clan leaders. Beautiful red woven vestments were draped over the shoulders of two of the startled young men whose faces revealed their panic and their dilemma (Were they ready for what lay ahead for them? Did they *want* it?). The situation was reminiscent of rural Ireland. The onus of responsibility to the elders, to the ancestors, to the endangered culture was large. One of the young men was hoping to enter Arizona State University in the Fall. The second young man seemed trapped and frightened. Would he be left alone to assume the responsibility? How many years would it take for young Kelly or Justin to become fluent in Tlingit and familiar with the key rituals and shamanic practices of their tribe?

Our fireplace was stoked and seemed to invite the elders to approach the flames, where the names of deceased clan ancestors were quietly recalled,. Harold asked permission to "feed" the ancestors by offering pieces of meat, bread and sticks of tobacco into the fireplace. It felt as if the dead might descend any moment.

Then, each of the Tlingit guests rose to speak ever so softly about the beautiful shamanic and ceremonial objects and wood carvings they had seen and been able to

touch in the bowels of the "Lowie" museum (as the Indians still call it), and they spoke hesitantly about what the visit had meant to them. Harold began by saying that he had recently passed through a difficult period in his life. He was angry and depressed. He lost faith in everything and refused to speak in English or in Tlingit. When the NAGPRA grant supporting the delegation's exploratory visit to the Hearst Museum Tlingit collections came through he realized (he said) he would have to try to speak. The visit into the archives was painful. "Those objects hadn't been spoken to in a long time," he said. The elder chief, Herman Davis, said "When I spoke to them, the figures told me: 'Have pity on us! Save us! We are lonely. It is too dark. We are trapped down here.'" Herman said in reply: "We hear you. That's why we are here. We will try to rescue you." The objects are alive, Herman explained. The hats and the crests and the amour are alive with the blood and the sweat and the hair of all those who wore them. Bob Sam told of having been turned away from the museum on three previous trips from Alaska. This time he got to see the remains of several hundred indigenous Alaskans in pull out-catalog type drawers. I had given Bob Sam the list of human remains that was sent me by the U.S. Department of the Interior. I had not made a request, but the Tlingit had indicated me as a member of their official team visit. The package had been torn open and scotch taped together before it got into my mailbox. The cover letter was missing so I do not even know who in the Department of the Interior sent it. The package also contained lists of several thousand historical human remains of Northern California Indians. "I cried for a long time down there," Bob Sam said. "Our people don't belong in drawers. Tlingit, means 'Human Beings.' We are human beings. Why have you done this to us? Why?"

## Return of the Repressed

> *"I will have more to say when I am dead"*
> (Edwin Arlington Robinson, cited by Verdery, 1999: 55)

Reverend Kittredge discovered something similar following the death and destruction of her father's body. The dead body was not as easily detached from the "person" as she had believed. Rather, the dead seemed to have a life of their own (see Kligman 1988; Verdery 1999). More than a semi-magical residue, more than a symbolic representation of the person who once was, her father's corpse was a tangible, palpable material object, a real presence recognized only after "it" had disappeared and then returned in its spectral form.[27] Her only consolation was the hope that some good might come out of the tragedy, that what happened to her father might serve as a wake-up call for Americans. "At least," she said wryly, "for those who are still able to sleep."

In the end it turned out that 25 British hospitals had purchased bone tissue from Biomedical Tissue Services in New Jersey and from Regeneration Technologies Inc. in Florida. At least 40 British patients received bone grafts and dental implants from human remains that had been stolen from funeral parlors in the United States. Alistair Cooke's bones had found their way home. But unlike the repatriation of Ishi's brain in August 2000 and its burial in a secret glade near the top of Mount

Lassen, together with his ashes recovered from Mount Olivet Cemetery in Oakland, Cooke's bones will never be sorted out. No prayers, no apologies, no forgiveness; just the sadness of Susan Cooke Kittredge who has been left dealing with a seemingly unending saga of pain and displacement. When a body goes missing, she said, it strikes terror in the survivors and plunges them, no matter how secular, no matter how rational, no matter how reconciled with the original death, into a "second death" experience worse than the first. And the haunting continues, made worse, for Alistair Cooke's daughter by the final and penultimate revelation. Not only her father's legs, but his arms, and his pelvis were taken by the New York City body brokers. Finally, her father will be reduced to pure spirit, and then perhaps she will finally be able to sleep.

## Acknowledgments

This chapter is drawn from sections of my forthcoming book, *A World Cut in Two: The Global Traffic in Humans for Organs*, University of California Press, a revised draft submitted in January 2011. I am grateful to my informants and collaborators, living and dead, but especially, Mrs Rosemary Tandiwe Sitshetshe (South Africa) and Paulo Pavesi, Senior (Brazil) whose grief, mourning and activism, each in response to the abuse of a child's body at the hands of state pathologists and surgeons, inspired my field studies of bodies that matter, dead as well as alive. I have used some material from two of my publications in *Anthropology Today*: "Ishi's Brain, Ishi's Ashes," *Anthropology Today* 1 (1) (February 2001): 12–18; and "Alistair Cooke's Bones: A Morality Tale," *Anthropology Today* (December 2006): 22(6): 3–8.

## NOTES

1 "The subject of the 'uncanny' is undoubtedly related to what is frightening – to what arouses dread and horror; equally certainly, too, the word is not always used in a clearly definable sense, so that it tends to coincide with what excites fear in general. Yet we may expect that a special core of feeling is present which justifies the use of a special conceptual term. One is curious to know what this common core is which allows us to distinguish as 'uncanny' certain things which lie within the field of what is frightening" (Freud 1919: 219–256).

2 Baptism and Confirmation are Roman Catholic sacraments, the one conferred soon after birth, the other after the "age of reason" and involves the decision of the older child to accept membership in the Church as a thinking, acting person, speaking on behalf of themselves before God. Both sacraments, like marriage, usually include white vestments signifying not only purity but commitment.

3 Diane has recently been a subject of research by a young faculty member in my department, Lisa Aziz-Zadeh, working in the lab of Antonio Damasio at U.S.C. using functional MRI (fMRI). The study appears to demonstrate that Diane's brain responds to cues as if her limbs were intact. (Personal communication, via e-mail, from Gelya Frank, November 4, 2010.)

4 The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. Psychiatric diagnoses are categorized by the DSM-IV, which is published by the American Psychiatric Association and covers all mental health disorders for both children and adults.

5 "Somataform disorders" are a relatively new category in the DSM-IV. They describe a group of disorders characterized by physical symptoms that cannot be fully explained by a

neurological or standardized medical ("organic") condition. The ancient Greeks used the term "hysteria" to refer to these individuals, many of whom were female. In 1859 Paul Briquet studied patients with multiple unexplained physical symptoms, which were later labeled Briquet's Syndrome. Charcot, Bernheim, Janet and Freud studied "hysterical" symptoms using hypnosis and alternating between trauma theory (the seduction hypothesis) and the unconscious production of physical symptoms. Disassociation was identified as a mechanism of self-alienation expressed in what became known as conversion hysterias and conversion reactions. "Briquet's Syndrome" has been retained in the DSM-IV (TR #300.81) to describe patients who are chronically sick (without cause) and who "complain of a multitude of symptoms referable to numerous different organ systems. This conviction of illness persists despite repeatedly negative and unrevealing consultations, hospitalizations, and diagnostic procedures, and patients continue to seek medical care, to take prescription medicines, and to submit to needless diagnostic procedures." Briquet's Syndrome is today described as somatization disorder, rarely found in males, and is linked to the relative powerlessness of women to address their angers and resentments in words rather than in neurotic bodily conditions. Scheper-Hughes (1993) and Scheper-Hughes and Lock (1987) have tried to destabilize the medical and psychosomatic interpretation of somatoform states of bodies that are mindful, and minds that are embodied in particular cultural and historical ways. See also: http://www.minddisorders.com/Py-Z/Somatization-disorder.html

6 This is a reference to the film *Dirty Pretty Things*, which captures the spirit, sense, and sensibilities that surround kidney selling by undocumented workers in the immigrant underworlds of London – hotel kitchen and cleaning staff, doormen, taxi drivers, morgue workers.

7 In an unpublished paper, "Never Leave 'Til Tomorrow What You Can Do Today: The Case Study of a Model Kholkhozna," Calin Goina has described the history and transformation of agricultural collectives in Transylvania which, he has assured me, are similar to the villages in and around Mingir, Moldova, where we collaborated in interviewing kidney sellers and their families and neighbors.

8 *Trafic d'Organes: on site in Moldova and Turkey with "Envoyé Special" documentary filmmaker, Catherine Berthillier*. Galaxie Presse, Paris, 2002.

9 In discussing the concept of early Christian "body love" with my freshman seminar at U.C. Berkeley (fall semester 2010) Brett Lews and Eric Hormuz had no difficulty understanding the suffering of St James the Mutilated, neither with his willingness to die for his beliefs nor the respect accorded to his severed toes by his Christian followers. Eric reminded me that Bob Marley went to his own early death at the age of 36 after having refused to have a cancerous toe amputated, following scriptural texts central to the belief system of Rastafarians, especially Leviticus 21: 5 (Douay-Rheims translation): "Neither shall they shave their head, nor their beard, nor make incisions in their flesh." The first part of the verse is the Biblical foundation for the Rastafarian practice of wearing dreadlocks; the later part is the basis for a belief that amputation (as well as other types of body modification) is forbidden. For Rastafarians, as for St James, the body does not belong to the individual; as a "temple of the holy spirit," it belongs to God alone. Bob Marley faced his death from metastatic melanoma with the tranquility of the early Christian martyrs, secure in the knowledge that death was not the end of his body.

10 "9/11 families want search for remains," *The Australian*, November 3, 2001.

11 During a visit to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo in April 2010 it was not the ancient mummies that captured my imagination so much as the golden containers in which the removed and retained mummified organs of members of the royal families were preserved. Egyptians probably began to mummify the dead during the Fourth and Fifth Dynasties (circa 2600 B.C.). The practice continued and developed for well over 2,000 years, into the Roman Period (ca. 30 B.C.–A.D. 364). An entry in the *Encyclopedia Smithsonian* describes the mummification process:

> The first step in the mummification process was the removal of all internal parts that might decay rapidly. The brain was removed by carefully inserting special hooked instruments up through the nostrils in order to pull out bits of brain tissue. It was a delicate operation, one which could easily disfigure the face. The embalmers then removed the organs of the abdomen and chest through a cut usually made on the left side of the abdomen. They left only the heart in place, believing it to be the center of a person's being and intelligence. The other organs were preserved separately, with the stomach, liver, lungs, and intestines placed in special boxes or jars today called canopic jars. These [jars] were buried with the mummy. In later times the organs were treated, wrapped, and replaced within the body. (http://www.si.edu/encyclopedia_si/nmnh/mummies.htm, accessed November 10, 2010.)

12 In my forthcoming book *A World Cut in Two: The Global Traffic in Humans for Organs* (Scheper-Hughes n.d.) I tell the story of Paulo Pavesi a Brazilian father whose injured and comatose son fell into the hands of criminal organ- and tissue-harvesters and whose real-life pursuit of justice for his son closely follows the script of *Miracle in Rome*.

13 The free market buying and selling of sacred relics during the middle ages so infuriated Martin Luther that he waged a holy war against Rome and the corruption of selling indulgences and sacred relics. He also condemned the defrauding of illiterate peasants with the sale of false relics: "What lies there are about relics! How does it happen that 18 apostles are buried in Germany when Christ had only 12?" Luther raged in his famous 95 Theses. Despite the Protestant Reformation, however, relics can still be purchased quite easily today on the Internet: *www.discountcatholicstore.com*. A medal with holy water from the miraculous healing grotto at Lourdes, France, is a real bargain at $5.95 plus tax and handling.

14 Lederer (2008: 35) sets out to explore "how the body and its parts – organs, tissues, cells, and fluids – possess not just medical and surgical significance, but complex political and cultural meanings as well."

15 Following a long and protracted SAP police investigation (with my assistance), an indictment against the NETCARE transplant clinic in St Augustine's Hospital, Durban, charged NETCARE hospital administrators, surgeons, and insurance companies with109 counts of fraud, human trafficking; 21 counts of forgery; 21 counts of uttering; 108 counts of assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm; 108 counts of no legal consent for kidney transplant/ nephrectomy; unlawful acquisition, use, or supply of a kidney against Section 34(a) of the South African Human Tissue Act, 1983; 5 counts of underage donors (minors) against Section 6 of the Prevention of Organized Crime Act, 1998; 106 counts of acquisition,use or possession of the proceeds of unlawful activities; and culpable homicide (of one kidney recipient). On 9 November, 2010, NETCARE pleaded guilty as charged.

16 I discuss these in other publications and in chapters of my forthcoming book, *A World Cut in Two: The Global Traffic in Humans for Organs.*

17 "Brilliant doctor had too much on his plate," *Halifax Daily News*, February 2, 2001.

18 Human Bodies, Human Choices: The Law on Human Organs and Tissue in England and Wales. London: Department of Health Consultation Report, October 14, 2002.

19 This section is based on Nancy Scheper-Hughes, 2006, "Alistair Cooke's Bones: a Morality Tale." *Anthropology Today* (December): 22(6): 3–8

20 Cited by BBC News, "Radio legend Cooke dies aged 95," March 30, 2004 GMT 11:01.

21 Susan Cooke Kittredge. "Found and Lost," homily, The Old Meeting House, East Montpelier Center, Vermont, January 8, 2006.

22 Susan Cooke Kittredge, "Because…" Homily delivered on Easter Sunday, The Old Meeting House, East Montpelier Center, Vermont, April 16, 2006.

23 A team of investigative reporters for the *Orange County Register* produced an award winning five-part series on tissue banking in California that uncovered widespread abuses of donated bodies, whole and in parts.

24 Director Brown of U.C. Irvine Willed Body Program discovered selling body parts. An internal audit released by U.C.I. showed that of 441 bodies donated to U.C.I. from January 1995 to August 1999, U.C.I. can account for 121. http://wiki.ocregister.com/Orange_County/Education/UC_Irvine/History/UCI_Willed_Body_Program

25 CLA Suspends Willed Body Program: http://articles.cnn.com/2004-03-09/justice/ucla.cadaver.suit_1_body-parts-human-tissue-henry-reid?_s=PM:LAW

26 Heitlinger was released after a long and costly FDA investigation. The laws regarding international trade in human body parts through free trade zones of international airports are weak and ambiguous.

27 The liveliness of dead bodies is, of course, a key theme of anthropological importance from Frazer's *The Golden Bough* and Malinowski's *Magic, Science and Religion* to Verdery and Kligman cited above. Not only the world's great religious figures but secular humanists and Marxists have contributed to the privileged place of the dead body in the cultural and political life of the society in question, as Lenin's tomb, Eva Peron's missing body, and the repatriation of the body of the revolutionary Ernesto "Che" Guevara illustrate.

## REFERENCES

Brandes, Stanley, 2005 The Cremated Catholic. *In* Commodifying Bodies. N. Scheper-Hughes and L. Wacquant, eds. London: Sage.

Brandes, Stanley, 2006 Skulls to the Living, Bread to the Dead: The Day of the Dead in Mexico and Beyond. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Bynum, Caroline Walker, 1992 Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion. Brooklyn: Zone Books.

Bynum, Caroline Walker, 1995 The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity. New York: Columbia University Press.

Bynum, Caroline Walker, 1998 Death and Resurrection in the Middle Ages. Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society 142(4): 589–596.

Bynum, Caroline Walker and Paula Gerson, eds., 1997 Body-Part Reliquaries, Gesta 36: 1.

Cheney, Annie, 2006. Body Brokers: Inside America's Underground Trade in Human Remains. New York: Broadway Books.

Conklin, Beth, 2001 Consuming Grief: Compassionate Cannibalism in an Amazonian Society. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Cornwell, John, 2010 The Papal Hijacking of Cardinal Newman. Financial Times, Weekend Section, Sunday, September 10, 2010, pp. 1–2.

Durrell, Gerald, 1956 My Family and Other Animals. London: Penguin.

de Preester, Helena and Veroniek Knockaert, eds., 2005 Body Image and Body Schema: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Body. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Elliott, Carl, 2003 Costing an Arm and a Leg: The Victims of a Growing Mental Disorder are Obsessed with Amputation. Slate, July 10 http://www.slate.com/id/2085402/, accessed November 10, 2010.

Frank, Gelya, 2000 Venus on Wheels: Two Decades of Dialogue on Disability, Biography, and Being Female. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Freud, Sigmund, 1915 The Complete Works of Sigmund Freud, ed. James Strachey et al., vol. 14. Repression. pp. 141–158. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1953–74.

Freud, Sigmund, 1919 The Complete Works of Sigmund Freud, ed. James Strachey et al., vol. 17. The Uncanny. pp. 219–256. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1953–74.

Foucault, Michel, 1973 The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception. London: Vintage.

Katches, Mark, William Heisel and Ronald Campbell, 2000 The Body Brokers: Part 1, Assembly Line (Part 1 of a five-part series). Orange County Register, April 16, 2000.

Kligman, Gail, 1988 The Wedding of the Dead: Ritual, Poetics, and Popular Culture in Transylvania. Berkeley: University of California Press

Leder, Drew, 1990 The Absent Body. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lederer, Susan E, 2008 Flesh and Blood: Organ Transplantation and Blood Transfusion in Twentieth-Century America. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lindbergh, Charles A., 1953 The Spirit of St. Louis. pp. 221–222. New York: Charles Scribners.

Linebaugh, Peter, 1975 The Tyburn Riot Against the Surgeons. *In* Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth Century England. Douglas Hay et al., eds. pp. 65–82. New York: Pantheon.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 1962 (2005) Phenomenology of Perception (*Phénoménologie de la Perception*). trans. Colin Smith. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Moniruzzaman, Monir, 2010 "Living Cadavers" in Bangladesh: Ethics of the Human Organ Bazaar. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto.

Morelli, Mario, 1999 Commerce in Organs: A Kantian View. Social Philosophy 30(2): 315–324.

Orange County Register, 2009 UCI Willed Body Program. http://wiki.ocregister.com/Orange_County/Education/UC_Irvine/History/UCI_Willed_Body_Program, accessed November 10, 2010.

Park, Katharine, 1994 The Criminal and the Saintly Body: Autopsy and Dissection in Renaissance Italy. Renaissance Quarterly 77: 1–33.

Park, Katharine, 1995 The Life of the Corpse: Dissection and Division in Late Medieval Europe. Journal of History of Medicine and Allied Sciences 50: 11–32.

Park, Katharine, 2006 Secrets of Women: Gender, Generation, and the Origins of Human Dissection. New York: Zoe Books.

Papadopulos, Leonidas and Georgia Lizardos, 1982 Great Synaxaristes of the Orthodox Church, vol. 11. November, 5th Edition. pp. 677–685. Athens, Greece.

Richardson, Ruth, 2000 Death, Dissection, and the Destitute. 2nd edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sachs, Albie, 2000 The Soft Vengeance of a Freedom Fighter. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Sacks, Oliver, 1999 A Leg to Stand On. New York: Touchstone Books.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, 1993 Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, 1994 Embodied Knowledge: Thinking with the Body in Critical Medical Anthropology. *In* Assessing Cultural Anthropology. Rob Borofsky, ed. pp. 229–242. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, 2003 Rotten Trade: Millennial Capitalism, Human Values, and Global Justice in Organ Trafficking. Journal of Human Rights 2(2): 197–226.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, 2004a The Last Commodity: Post-Human Ethics and the Global Traffic in "Fresh" Organs. *In* Global Assemblages. Aihwa Ong and Stephen Collier, eds. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, 2004b Parts Unknown: Undercover Ethnography of the Organ-Trafficking Underworld. Ethnography 5(1): 29–73.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, 2008 Illegal Organ Trade: Global Justice and the Traffic in Human Organs. *In* Living Donor Organ Transplants. Rainer Grussner and Enrico Bedeti, eds. Chapter 10, pp. 106–121. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, 2010 The Body of the Terrorist: Body Parts, Bio-Piracy and the Spoils of War at Israel's National Forensic Institute. CounterPunch 17(15), entire issue.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, n.d. A World Cut in Two: The Global Traffic in Humans for Organs.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy and Margaret Lock, 1987 The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work in Medical Anthropology. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 1(1): 6–41.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy and L. Wacquant, eds., 2005 Commodifying Bodies. London: Sage.

Stadler, Nurit, 2005 Terror, Aid and Organization: The Haredi Disaster Victim Identification Teams (ZAKA). Isaeli Anthropological Quarterly 78(3) Summer 2005, pp. 619–651.

Verdery, Katherine, 1999 The Political Lives of Dead Bodies. New York: Columbia University Press.

Washington, Harriet A., 2006 Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present. New York: Doubleday

Wise, Sarah, 2004 The Italian Boy: A Tale of Murder and Body Snatching in 1830s. London, New York: Henry Holt and Company.

World Health Organization, 2003 Final Report: Ethics, access and safety in tissue and organ transplantation: Issues of global concern Madrid, Spain, 6–9 October 2003.

CHAPTER 11

# (TRANS)GENDER
## *Tomboi Embodiment*

*Evelyn Blackwood*

Bodies seem to make particular claims about who we are as humans. Historically the body's "truth" has been offered time and again as the physical evidence of cultural categories. Bodies marked by categories of race were searched for the base nature or pathology that supposedly separated those bodies from unmarked white European bodies, as works on the "Venus Hottentot" attest. The grip of bodily claims has led members of minoritized groups to remake their bodies in line with the dominant unmarked group by changing, for instance, the shape of their hair and eyes, or the width and height of their noses. Similarly and in conjunction with scientific studies of racial difference, scientists in the late-19th and early-20th century peered at female homosexual bodies to find the physical affirmation of variant desires in large clitorises or poorly developed labia. The body continues to be a battlefield for evidence that cultural categories are based in "rational, scientific" thought. My point is not to argue that biology and culture have no interaction, nor to discuss the ideological aspects of scientific research, but to take this conundrum in a different direction by exploring the multiple ways that bodies provide meaning for transgendered people.

The orthodoxy of bodily truth in the United States forces transgendered people to look away from their bodies to find their gender. Cultural intransigence and myopia further compels them to recraft their bodies to confirm the "truth" of gender. Their bodies are required to affirm cultural expectations of masculinity or femininity by showing reliable signs of breasts or of facial hair and a proper bulge in the crotch to convince those normatively marked for gender that cultural frameworks of meaning are intact. In this way transpeople assure those trapped in the gender binary that they (those living in the trap) have the right of it – that bodies are absolutely determinative

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Evelyn Blackwood. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

of who people are. Indeed transsexuals are expected to tout the party line, now taken up globally, that it is they who are trapped in the "wrong body." At the same time, hidden behind the fiction of properly configured bodies lies the fact that recreated bodies only serve to confirm the social origins of Man and Woman. The irony is not lost on some transgender activists. Kate Bornstein, author of *Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women and the Rest of Us*, deadpans in her documentary film "Adventures in the Gender Trade": "Once you buy a gender, you'll buy anything to keep it."

Binaries of bodies, sexes and genders are exceedingly difficult to ignore or relinquish. Shelly Errington (1990) distinguishes between two categories of sex, which she labels "sex" and "Sex" with a capital S to highlight the cultural creation of bodily meanings. Arguing that "we are born biologically unfinished and require human culture in order to develop into humans" (1990: 11), Errington suggests that the human body is not the fundamental cause of any social behavior, but part of the process. She differentiates between "sex" and "Sex" "to point to something that exists but has no meaning outside the way it is construed within specific cultures and historical periods" (1990: 27). Thus "sex" refers to human bodies but what those bodies mean cannot be characterized without reference to "Sex," a particular social construct, which in the West involves ideas about unitary, natural and fixed genders.

Errington's formulation provides an apt starting point to think about how bodies become meaningfully gendered only in the context of deeply held beliefs about genitals, their functioning and use. Under the gender system of "Sex," cultural natives work to assume the normative category of "man" or "woman" and so attain cultural and social intelligibility in a dualistic system. Sexual organs are used to define gender in many (but not all) cultural contexts. In those cultural contexts, embodied gender must align with "sex." Embodiment, however, plays an intriguing role for those whose gender transgresses normative definitions. The body that confirms gender may also deny it.

## Embodiment and Transgender Studies

Anthropological studies on non-normative gender expression situate "transgender" as a social category at the intersections of sex and gender. The term "transgender" is generally used broadly by activists and trans scholars, such as Susan Stryker and Kate Bornstein, to refer to identities or practices that move between or transgress sex and gender binaries. Its meaning has shifted, however, since the 1990s from a more general category to a fixed identity. David Valentine's (2007) discussion of the term points to its ambiguity as well as ongoing institutionalization in the U.S. I want to note here that the term "transgender" does not easily translate globally because of the complexity of practices it is forced to encompass. Yet its circulation via international lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) activist groups makes it useful both to claim and contest.

Anthropological attention to transgressive bodies has focused on instances when a non-normative expression of gender identity is sufficient to rename bodies. Early research on renamed bodies led anthropologists to identify them as a "third sex" or "third gender" because they did not fit within a normative binary system of gender. Recent work explores how gender transgressors embody or carry off a gender that

does not follow normative scripts. Anthropological analyses help to elucidate the social construction of gender, recognizing both the power of gender ideologies to enforce gendered meanings on bodies and the ability of humans to produce stable genders irrespective of the cultural ideologies attached to and defining those bodies.

Studies of male-bodied transgendered individuals, particularly Brazilian *travesti*, document the processes of identifying as women. Kulick (1998) suggests that sexual, embodied desire takes precedence over gender identity in forming travesti subjectivity. Studies by Kulick and others locate the source of femininity in travestis' feelings of desire for men, in their preference for the receptive role, or from having their bodies read as sufficiently feminine by older boys to be used as a "passive" and therefore culturally feminine sex object. These feelings move young males to identify as girls, who embody femininity through silicone injections and hormones, but maintain the possibility of "active" sexuality by retaining their male organs.

In U.S. transgender narratives the physical body's evidence is denied and gendered selves are accomplished despite the body's apparently contradictory evidence. For some transgendered individuals the physical body is ignored as they grow up because of the dissonance it creates (Cromwell 1999). For female-bodied transmen, testosterone or "T" becomes a critical tool to establish, maintain and enforce a coherent embodied gender. "T" gives one the facial and body hair, the deeper voice, and enhanced musculature that helps make one readable as a man.

Other anthropological work on transgendered selves, including *bakla* and *hijra*, addresses the complexities of identities and the inconsistency of selves that are portrayed. For bakla in the Philippines, a female heart and feeling like a woman are part of being bakla, as is an attraction to normatively gendered men (Manalansan 2003). Reddy (2005) underscores the fluidity of hijra identity configurations in India. Embodied practices that mark hijra may include taking the passive role in sexual acts with "real" men, emasculation through removable of external genitalia, as well as the performance of gender through dress, make-up and movement. According to Reddy, these practices create a multiplicity of different axes from which to craft a hijra identity.

Attention to globalization has resulted in a number of intriguing studies that document a proliferation of gendered bodies as new discourses and new consumer possibilities reshape "local" understandings and meanings (see, for example, Besnier 2002; Donham 1998). Literature on masculine females in Southeast and East Asia demonstrates the play of gender ideologies, international LGBT movements and discourses, women's spaces, and feelings of masculinity that are used to define a variety of masculine identities (see, for example, Davies 2007; Sinnott 2004; Wieringa et al. 2007).

My work on the gender transgressive bodies of tombois in West Sumatra, Indonesia, which is the focus of the remainder of this chapter, addresses the multiplicity of gender and bodily meanings across time and space. Tombois, who are female-bodied, express a sense of self that plays with gender, responds to gender expectations and normative masculine codes, and insists on its own meanings all at the same time. Tombois recall always having been boys, similar to many other narratives of transgendered identities, and suitably perform their gender by the clothing, attitudes, walking and talking that are common to gendered identities. The body in this instance reflects or wears the meanings of the self. Yet tombois also rely on their bodies, in this case their embodied feelings, to substantiate and confirm their masculinity.

For these tombois body knowledge offers evidence of gender and substantiates a masculinity that is nevertheless not fixed. By focusing on body knowledge, tomboi praxis and moments of interaction within particular spaces, I develop a theory of contingent masculinities to account for the multiple subject positions that tombois take up. My attention to the relation between body knowledge and tombois' self-understanding offers a new perspective on embodied and transgressive subjectivities.

## Embodiment and Subjectivity

Tombois in Padang West Sumatra are female-bodied individuals who lay claim to the social category "man," by which is meant the ideologically dominant conception of manhood that circulates arguably across most of Indonesia. In speaking of themselves as men, tombois state that not only do they dress and act like men, physically they embody masculinity as well. One tomboi told me, "You can tell by the way they walk, like a guy, and the way they talk, which is coarser and more firm." Tombois fit within the category "transgender" because they exceed or transgress normative gender categories, but they do not apply the term to themselves. They claim the Indonesian word "lesbi," derived from the English word "lesbian," used commonly in Indonesia for same-sex attraction between women and for masculine females (see Blackwood 2010).

Tombois' self-positioning as men is not uncomplicated. Despite articulating a stable sense of self that they consider to be the same as other men's, tombois take up different subject positions in different spaces, engaging with and reproducing a version of femininity when they move within family and community spaces. As with all gendered subjectivities, tombois are not unambiguously gendered men but inhabit multiple and seemingly contradictory positions.

Subjectivity as a term refers to "the ensemble of modes of perception, affect, thought, desire, and fear that animate acting subjects" (Ortner 2006: 107). This definition emphasizes thought and emotion, but an important aspect of subjectivity that I bring attention to is the way subjectivity is experienced physically, a point I use to help understand tombois' positionalities. Subjectivity in this sense can be understood as a bodily experience, or being in the body, that connects thought, feeling, movement and sensation. In their introduction to *Beyond the Body Proper*, Farquhar and Lock use the term "lived body" to highlight bodies as "assemblages of practices, discourses, images, institutional arrangements, and specific places and projects" (2007: 1). For them embodiment emphasizes process and contingency, not fixity or containment. I bring these two notions of embodiment and subjectivity together through what I call body knowledge, that is, the bodily aspects of one's subjectivity, which are the physical sensations that are produced by and experienced in social interactions. These physical sensations, such as calmness, happiness, pleasure, discomfort, anxiety or fear, are physically produced and felt in the body, becoming the evidence for a sense of self that is experienced as a feeling of rightness, correctness, or inappropriateness attached to particular behaviors.

Body knowledge as I use it takes into account not only social interactions but the ways bodies negotiate space. The physical feelings that are evoked as one moves across gender "borders" are telling for tombois in a context in which their transgressive

gender practices are differently produced in family and community spaces. As tombois move across different cultural spaces, they manifest practices and behaviors congruent with those spaces, while at the same time producing apparently contradictory subjectivities. Thus an analysis of space is a critical tool to help identify the particular moments in which tombois take up and embody certain subject positions. I explore those mundane spaces that tombois inhabit or move through on a daily basis, including community space, where one is known, grew up, or has a history and family, and household space, pertaining to domestic contexts or family residences.

Due to length limitations I do not address here public, or anonymous, spaces or the intimate sexual spaces that tombois and their partners share. By exploring the particular household and community contexts in which tombois' female bodies become visible, I address how tombois understand that visibility in light of their own positioning as men.

## TOMBOIS IN WEST SUMATRA

Indonesia, a post-colonial state and former Dutch colony, is the largest Muslim country in the world. Since its proclamation of independence in 1945, it has created a national identity for its citizens, becoming a nation of islands that is no stranger to globalized processes. Padang, which sits on the coast of West Sumatra, has been a major trading port in Southeast Asia for hundreds of years. With a population of over 700,000 in 2000, it is the 12th largest city in Indonesia, neither a global metropolis nor a non-metropolitan area, which makes it an intriguing site to study global sexualities. The subject positions that tombois and their girlfriends take up are informed by an array of global discourses at the same time that these subject positions respond to more localized discourses and histories. Here I set aside for the moment some of the larger global connections to address tomboi embodiment in light of their everyday interactions with kin and community.

My analysis is based on extensive research conducted in 2001 and 2004. I met 28 individuals who were either tombois or women involved with tombois. I formally interviewed 16 individuals (eight tombois and eight girlfriends) and spent time with them in the spaces that they inhabited, including their work spaces as well as their social spaces. Tombois' partners, whom I refer to as girlfriends or femmes, identify as normatively gendered women who are attracted to men; they do not generally see themselves as fixed within the category "lesbi." "Tomboi" and "femme" are some of the terms available in Indonesian to identify a masculine female and h/er partner, but others are also used. When referring to tombois, I use the pronominal constructions "s/he" and "h/er" as a way to disrupt the binary genders of the English language. No English pronouns adequately convey the Indonesian usage, in which the third person pronoun is gender-neutral.

These individuals come from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, from quite poor to well-to-do, although most are only of average means. Their schooling ranged from middle school, to high school, to some university. Most, but not all, are Muslim. Their ages span late teens to early 30s; the average age is close to 30. Using friendship networks to make contacts meant that most of the individuals I eventually met were of the same age cohort. Further, most of the tombois I interviewed belonged to two groups of

friends. Members of each group hung out together and had been friends in some cases since middle and high school years. They had developed and negotiated their identities together and relied on each other for knowledge about being tombois. One tomboi in particular provided several of the key stories in this chapter, but h/er experiences and self-positioning were echoed in the interviews I conducted with other tombois.

## Masculine feelings

The first time Dedi, one of the tombois, invited me to h/er family's house to eat, I was not sure what to expect. Dedi met me at h/er family business and then took me to h/er mother's house, which was off the main road in a small group of houses nestled next to rice fields. Dedi was dressed as s/he normally was, in typical men's attire, and appeared to be quite comfortable around h/er family. H/er mother and older sister had prepared the meal for us without Dedi's assistance. S/he and h/er close friend Tommi, another Tomboi, carried the food to the half-finished house next door where we ate. This was one of several occasions when I visited Dedi while s/he was at home or at the family business. On all these occasions Dedi did nothing to change h/er appearance, although s/he was more polite in front of h/er elders, and s/he frequently had other tomboi friends with h/er who were well-known to h/er family.

Tombois generally live in the same residences as their parents or kin and maintain close ties with them. I use the word "kin" to indicate that Padang "families" extend beyond and encompass more than parents and children and usually comprise three generations of individuals who are connected through emotional, economic, and lineal ties. Several of the tombois work with close kin in family businesses; most rely on their families for access to jobs or financial support to start businesses or purchase things like motorcycles. Despite the fact that kin "understand" tombois to be female based on their knowledge of tombois' bodies during the period when they were growing up, tombois maintain the appearance of masculinity within familial spaces. They wear the same clothes they always wear, pants, t-shirts, belts and shoes, which are typical dress for young men.

Tombois' childhood narratives describe loving everything associated with boys and boys' things. Tommi, a tomboi born in 1975, said, "I liked all the toys and sports that boys liked – fishing, flying kites, playing with cars, playing soccer, playing with marbles. I really liked playing with cars." Several tombois mentioned that they started wearing boys' clothes at a young age. Andri said, "I've been wearing boys' clothes since I was very young, in first grade [about six years of age]." Tombois I interviewed said they wore boys' clothes because they liked them better than girls' clothes. More importantly, wearing boys' clothes created a feeling of rightness that became embodied as natural and fitting with their sense of themselves as boys. Robi said, "I wouldn't wear a skirt, it didn't feel right. I wore pants even to weddings. If my parents wouldn't let me dress as I wanted, then I wouldn't go to the wedding at all." To be forced to attend a wedding in girls' clothes was embarrassing for Robi because it was not how s/he saw h/erself. Echoing those feelings, Sal said, "Girls' clothes make me feel really weird and awkward."

In these accounts tombois never question why they did not like girls' clothes or girls' games; they just knew that things associated with girls did not feel right. Wearing girls' clothes disrupted their sense of self as boys, creating feelings of discomfort

and awkwardness, of not being oneself, that made it difficult to interact with others properly. In contrast wearing boys' clothes allowed them to be visible as boys and elicited responses from others that were appropriate for boys. Consequently, doing boys' activities and wearing boys' clothes constructed a particular feeling and experience of gender that came to be embodied physically as the truth of their gender.

Discussing their lives as adults, tombois I interviewed explained that they have the same privileges and freedom of movement as other young men. Dedi said, "My family doesn't restrict me. I'm free to hang out with whomever I want." Tommi, who also lived at h/er family home, told me, "Since I was little I hung out with guys so my family understands that I'm more like a guy. After high school I was given my freedom because I promised to protect myself… I can go out at night, like guys do. And I can also sleep wherever I want to, like guys." Dedi said that h/er habit of sleeping "here and there," meaning at different friends' houses, is one reason h/er family recognizes h/er as a tomboi. Sal, who is in h/er early 20s and keeps a place at h/er maternal aunt's house, commented, "I like my freedom and don't want to be tied down." S/he is often away from home visiting other tombois or hanging out at the local coffee shop (*warung*). Tombois' abilities to move freely in space and to sleep wherever they want, which are encoded as men's privileges, signify their masculinity and their families' acknowledgement of that masculinity.

Tombois' self-narratives underscore their possession of characteristics that are associated with men. Tombois laid claim to men's feelings, characteristics, spirit/soul (*jiwa*), actions, and appearance. They participated in masculine behaviors that are typical for young men, including heavy drinking, smoking and staying out late without supervision. Robi, one of the tombois, said, "There is no difference between me and other men," while Tommi said that s/he does not see anything womanly in h/erself. Tombois feel that they possess the characteristics associated with men and convey these characteristics through what they do. They talked about hanging out at night in men's spaces without fear of physical or sexual violence. Noni's comment about tombois' behavior makes this point clearly: "But those [tombois], they're not afraid, they're very tough (*jantan sekali*). They look just like guys. People don't know if they're guys or not, and they act so tough, other guys are afraid of them. So they're not afraid to go out at night at all." For tombois, their ability to handle themselves in public spaces is proof of their status as men.

Being men for tombois is not about imitation; tombois' masculinity is deeply rooted in their bodies, in the sense that Bourdieu suggests. He argues that "the most fundamental structures of the group" take root in "the primary experiences of the body" (1990: 71). Bourdieu suggests that social meanings are learned by the body and borne on the body, a process that tends to take place "below the level of consciousness" (1990: 73), producing bodily sensations of rightness or wrongness depending on the interaction.

Tombois' body knowledge assures them of their proper positioning as men. Tommi told me of one instance that spoke of the connection between his bodily feelings and sense of self. Tommi said that when s/he rides on the bus, "if the woman next to me treats me like a woman, by putting her hand on my arm or leg, it doesn't feel right." In public spaces in Padang and elsewhere in Indonesia, men and women do not touch because in this Muslim society such contact is deemed inappropriate and unseemly. Casual contact between women, however, is perfectly acceptable. In this situation,

when a woman touched Tommi casually as if s/he were another woman, the depth of Tommi's self-positioning as a man produces a bodily discomfort that Tommi reads as not feeling right. Tommi does not see h/erself as a woman and 'doesn't feel right' because this woman touched h/er in public. In this interaction Tommi is being treated like a woman, which s/he experiences as inappropriate.

Through their day-to-day activities and interactions tombois embody and perform masculinity. I use performance in the Butlerian sense of practices, expressed in bodily gestures, movements and styles, through which gendered meanings are constructed. Tombois' performance, however, does more than put into effect what it names (masculinity); it attaches masculinity to what they consider to be, and what is culturally read as, a female body. By performing masculinity, a process that creates a lived masculine body that moves and feels in the ways bodies socially defined as men do, tombois enact a self they come to recognize as masculine.

## A "woman" at home

Despite the legitimacy tombois have within family spaces, they face certain obstacles in enacting their masculinity. Although they see themselves, as they say in their own words, "the same as men," at the same time cultural understandings of female bodies situate them somewhat precariously within the social category "man." Tombois' kin may respond to and treat them as men in many ways but they retain knowledge of tombois' female bodies by virtue of having raised them or having grown up with them. Tombois' performance of masculinity does not erase for their kin the gendered expectations assigned to female bodies. In the context of everyday life with their families tombois I interviewed accommodate kin expectations by engaging with and reproducing femininity to a certain extent despite presenting themselves as men. In these instances tombois do not insist on a proper performance of masculinity.

Dedi was talking about h/er family one day and commented that at h/er mother's house, s/he is "a woman at home" (*wanita di rumah*). Struck by that comment, which I thought was so out of character for a tomboi, I asked h/er to explain what s/he meant. Dedi said it means "doing feminine duties around the house, like washing dishes, sweeping, keeping my room clean." At the same time that Dedi was careful to perform some feminine tasks, s/he is not just like other women at home because there are limits to what s/he feels comfortable doing. When I asked h/er if h/er feminine duties included cooking or washing clothes, she said, "No. I won't do that." In West Sumatra, the mantra of womanhood, as told repeatedly to me, is 'a woman cooks, sews and takes care of her husband and family.' In light of this expectation, Dedi's lack of knowledge about cooking would not be interpreted as simple lack of interest or ability but as lack of femininity. Dedi proudly told me that s/he is asked to do repair work and painting around the house, which are considered men's jobs. Tommi used the same phrase as Dedi to describe how s/he acts at home. S/he is "a woman at home and a man outside." But Tommi also said "I am never asked to do women's jobs around the house, only if I want to." Being a "woman at home" appears to mean that s/he is more careful at home in how s/he presents h/erself.

The expectations of femininity at home coupled with tombois' desires to express their masculinity led to a certain level of subterfuge. Dedi, who took up smoking and drinking in high school, recounted with much laughter what happened when s/he

first started smoking. "One time I was in my room [at home] with [three other tombois]. We were all smoking. After they left, there was so much smoke in the room I had to use mosquito repellant to cover the smell so my mother wouldn't notice." After high school Dedi told me, "There was not a day that went by that I didn't get drunk, but my family didn't know it. One time during Puasa [the month of fasting during Ramadan] Tommi and I were out all night drinking at a café. The owner had to throw us out. We could hardly walk so we took a taxi home. When we got to my house, it was about 3 a.m. and everyone was asleep. We tiptoed into the house as quietly as we could and went to the bathroom to put our heads in the *bak* [a small tub that always has water in it] to try to sober up. Then we fell asleep with our clothes still on." In this account Dedi's efforts to cover up h/er masculine behaviors (drinking and smoking) point to h/er ability to manage disparate subject positions, the rowdy young man and the polite daughter.

The care taken at home to perform some feminine practices and to hide those practices that are not considered appropriate for women is meant to show respect for and preserve relationships with families. In recounting these stories Dedi never suggested that s/he felt burdened or angered by the need to conceal h/er masculine behaviors. By being "a woman at home," Dedi said, s/he is able to maintain a good relationship with h/er mother. Dedi's story is indicative of the feelings expressed by other tombois I interviewed. Tombois asserted the importance of upholding kin expectations to a certain degree because loyalty and duty to family and kin carry a great deal of weight. In Indonesia kin ties provide individuals with a social identity and sense of belonging that they rely on throughout their lives. In addition kin are a source of emotional and financial support, paving the way for adult occupations and opportunities through paying for education, extending loans and helping find jobs. To act in a way that would create a rift between oneself and one's family is neither advisable nor acceptable. Thus, Dedi's feelings about family lead h/er to act in ways that maintain good relations at home.

Despite the fact that most tombois have been pressured at one point or another to marry, they are unswerving in their loyalty and sense of obligation to their families. Danny said, "Family is number one. You have to protect your relationship to your family." When asked what h/er family and h/er girlfriend meant to h/er, Dedi said, "Others are second after family. I told my girlfriend, family business is number one. In fact, no matter what, family stays number one, a girlfriend is number two. That's the agreement I have with my girlfriend." Because I was surprised at the depth of Dedi's loyalty and devotion to h/er family, I questioned h/er still further about h/er feelings for h/er girlfriend. Dedi responded, "Ya, my girlfriend is everything to me. But the possibility of [the relationship] ending is definitely there. As for family, there is no such thing as ex-family, but there are ex-lovers." Both Danny and Dedi are uncompromising in asserting the importance of family; being without family or losing family support is the idea that appears on the face of it nonsensical (there is no such thing as ex-family).

Feelings of loyalty and respect toward kin, evidenced in forms of bodily emotion and sentiment are durably embedded in bodies. Take, for instance, the fondness Indonesians express for being with others or being in a large group of kin. The Indonesian word *ramai*, which means lively or bustling, is used positively in reference to large gatherings and signifies the pleasure of being immersed in a crowd.

For Indonesians, being surrounded by a large group of kin produces a sense of happiness and security, while solitude is seen as undesirable and in fact queer. The unattached person bereft of family or kin is to be pitied. Durably embedded, these feelings about one's kin link to broader cultural processes of social identity and belonging that make family and kin ties irreplaceable despite the tensions they may produce.

By acting with restraint and politeness within the house, Dedi demonstrates respect for h / er mother, as h / er mother would expect of a daughter. Dedi's feelings of respect and loyalty are expressed materially by washing dishes, keeping h / er room clean and sweeping floors, duties that sons typically would not perform. At the same time, h / er refusal to perform certain tasks, such as cooking, which would position h / er too much as a woman, suggests that a feminine performance can only be taken so far, beyond which it begins to feel uncomfortable and seriously challenge h / er masculine subject position. H / er relationship with h / er family is managed by maintaining some aspects of femininity, while refusing others. Like Dedi, tombois perform a version of femininity within household space, taking on some tasks that are considered feminine and avoiding certain markers of masculine behavior, such as smoking. In fact tombois' actions at home speak to the contingency of embodiment and subjectivity.

## Versions of Femininity in Community Space

Tombois' performance of femininity extends beyond household spaces to their immediate surroundings, which I have called community space. Although as mentioned above, Tommi divides the world into two spaces, home and outside the home, where different behaviors are performed, not all public spaces outside the home are the same. Community space, which is interspersed with kin and long-time acquaintances who knew tombois when they were growing up and attending school in girls' uniforms, is distinguished by the extension of kin networks and their social and material support into public domains. As in household spaces, tombois present a complex positionality in community spaces that both calls on their masculinity and recalls their female bodies.

Dedi is friends with many of the men who come to the family business where s / he and other family members work. S / he talks to them easily and at length, unlike h / er unmarried sister, who is polite and courteous to men customers but spends little time in conversation with them. When asked why s / he engages more freely in conversation with men than women do, Dedi said, "If a woman hangs out with guys, people will say she is bad, but for tombois, they understand, they say it's natural, of course a tomboi has men friends. Nobody is bothered by that." According to Dedi, even the wives of married men are unconcerned about their husbands hanging out with a tomboi, the implication being that because s / he is a tomboi, wives do not perceive h / er as a potential threat to their marriage in the way that they would if s / he were a woman. Dedi said that many of the men confide in h / er. "They even ask me about their problems with girlfriends – what do I think about this or that girl. Because, you know, I'm a female too so of course I would know more about women." During this conversation Dedi asserts the naturalness of h / er interactions with other men, yet at the same time states that because she is female, s / he has a better understanding of women than men do. S / he attributes this understanding to the awareness being female gives h / er

of what girls are like. Here Dedi recalls h/er female body as part of h/erself, giving voice to a cultural expectation that female bodies produce female ways of knowing. Having a female body then is not seen as a contradiction of her masculinity but as part of h/er self, h/er experiences and h/er understanding of the world.

Tombois constantly manage community space in ways that maintain their masculinity yet adhere to certain norms of femininity. When I visited Tommi's café one evening with Dedi, I was surprised because Dedi would not smoke. When I asked Dedi why s/he would not smoke, s/he only said, "*Segan*." Segan refers to a feeling of reluctance or hesitation to do something that might be considered improper. In this instance we were in a café run by Tommi, Dedi's close friend, but two of Tommi's siblings, who also knew Dedi, were working there as well. While Dedi had told me that tombois can smoke because it is what men do, s/he was not operating under that principle in this space. Instead s/he was reluctant to be seen smoking in a place where people knew h/er and might report back to Dedi's family about h/er smoking. H/er reluctance in this space is due to extensive kin and community networks that make it likely someone s/he knows will see h/er. After much pressure from me, because I could not believe that a tomboi was refusing to smoke, Dedi finally took a drag on a cigarette, but looked extremely uncomfortable doing so and was very careful to hide the cigarette under the table. Dedi told me that whether s/he smokes or not depends on the context and the chances of h/er family finding out. In this context s/he avoids behavior that might eventually cause h/er family shame. Being segan then reflects a bodily sense of discomfort at the thought of embarrassing family, which takes priority in this context over h/er sense of being a man who smokes.

Not only do tombois consciously avoid masculine behaviors within household and community spaces, they also permit themselves to be read as women through others' use of female forms of address for them. Terms of address used in conversation in Indonesia are based on the age, sex and status of both speakers, effectively slotting people into gendered categories. People tend to employ gender-marked kin terms when addressing acquaintances or close friends. Dedi is called Aunt Di by younger kin and "older sister" (*uni*) by customers at h/er family business. This term of address undeniably marks h/er as a woman and tips off others nearby who might hear h/er being addressed that way. Robi mentioned to me that s/he is called aunt by h/er younger kin. Tommi is called "Uni" at work. Since even some family members use h/er nickname, Tomboi, or call h/er "older brother" (*uda*), I asked h/er why s/he was addressed like that at work. S/he said simply, "Because it's the workplace." By calling her Uni, the employee marked Tommi as a woman, which s/he did not contest, despite the fact that as a manager, Tommi might have been addressed by other terms.

Within community space where interactions with kin and close acquaintances are frequent, tombois are likely to be called on as kins*women*. The presence of kin and acquaintances in this space makes tombois reluctant (segan) to insist on male terms of address; in fact, they do not find it important to do so. Robi shrugged off the apparent inconsistency by saying, "It doesn't matter. At home we have to follow the rules." For Tommi, being called Uni is expected and unproblematic at work.

In everyday practice terms of address invoke ties of kinship, thus reminding tombois of and recalling their female bodies. Although hailed as women on these occasions, tombois did not express a sense of discomfort but rather acknowledged the importance of family allegiance. In this matter it feels right to "follow the rules" with family

and kin. Female terms of address are considered acceptable because they recall and substantiate one's kinship and solidarity with family and community, a position that produces a sense of well-being through relationality. The reminder of their female bodies through female terms of address is also a reminder of the security kinship offers.

## Family Loyalty and Masculine Competence

While tombois' positionality as masculine females within community spaces may call for certain compromises in forms of address, it also enables tombois to carry on relationships with women that are invisible to others. By colluding with others' assumptions about their positionality as women, tombois in some contexts can move in spaces that other men cannot. Sinnott calls this a "silent complicity" that in Thailand allows toms, who are masculine females, and dees, their feminine partners, "a level of social maneuverability in which they can construct their own social world" (2004: 145, 146). In colluding with misreadings tombois make use of others' readings of them as "women" to engage in certain practices that would otherwise be unacceptable for men.

Tommi is accepted as a part of h/er girlfriend's family and frequently spends the night with Lina. Staying at Lina's house, however, is dependent on Tommi's being taken as a woman since no family would ever knowingly allow a man to stay overnight in the house with their unmarried daughter. According to Tommi, "I can stay overnight with my girlfriend but if I was a guy, I would be thrown out of the house." In Indonesia as elsewhere in Southeast Asia, it is typical for girls and unmarried women to sleep together; no one thinks anything of it because having someone to sleep with (of the same sex) is considered preferable to sleeping alone. In Padang this freedom to move under the radar, so to speak, enabled Robi and Noni to live together in a small apartment because the landlady thought that they were both women and so did not question their arrangement. Tombois then make use of the cultural norms of same-sex friendship and sociality to create a space for their relationships. Collusion in such instances creates tensions over the possibility of being found out, confronted, or gossiped about, but it also offers tombois the opportunity to live with their partners.

Tombois' collusion with misreadings about their sexual relationships expresses both feelings of family loyalty and, importantly, a sense of masculinity. Kin do sometimes become suspicious that a couple are lovers, but such suspicions are always met with absolute denial, after which kin tend to leave them alone. Part of the reason for denying such accusations, according to Tommi, is to protect h/er family and h/er girlfriend. Tommi said that taking such a stance "makes me feel good because I don't want to make life difficult for my parents or cause problems for my girlfriend." Tommi's response suggests that denial is valued and "feels good" because it maintains family honor and the honor of h/er girlfriend.

In this case h/er desire to protect h/er girlfriend situates Tommi's behavior within the corpus of masculinity. In h/er view honorable men should protect their girlfriends' reputations by ensuring that no gossip circulates about them. For Tommi, the sense of feeling good about h/er actions speaks to a body knowledge that moves h/er to take up a complex set of positions, protecting h/er girlfriend by denying

their relationship to their families while at the same time showing respect for their families by not embarrassing them. Thus, colluding with readings of oneself as a woman and engaging in complex practices of femininity and masculinity enables tombois to preserve and benefit from the social relations within which they and their girlfriends live.

*Tombois and Contingent Masculinities*

The awareness shared by kin and community of tombois' female bodies carries with it certain consequences for tombois. Within household and community spaces tombois' female bodies are called on by family members and recalled by tombois. Despite positioning themselves as men, tombois manifest particular practices congruent with those spaces and accede to certain interpretations and cultural expectations assumed to be attached to female bodies. The femininity a tomboi invokes at home and in community spaces suggests that being tomboi is a contingent masculinity that takes into account the culturally dictated positioning attached to female bodies and the material effects of that positioning, such as marriage and reproduction or loss of kin ties if one explicitly refuses to comply.

Tombois I interviewed demonstrate their masculinity through everyday practices of dress, appearance, posture, behavior and language, but in certain contexts they perform a version of femininity when expectations of filial duty and proper womanhood are unavoidable. Not only do tombois consciously hide certain masculine behaviors, such as smoking, to avoid bringing shame to their families, they also permit themselves to be read as women within household and community spaces. Actions within family and community spaces point to the context-specificity of tomboi praxis. Although tombois see themselves 'the same as men,' family and community spaces require other practices that express femininity as well as masculinity. In these spaces tombois' feelings of reluctance (segan) to behave in ways that are not appropriate in front of certain kin, result in their performance of a version of femininity that signifies their respect for and ongoing allegiance to their families.

Gender theorists, such as Judith Butler (1990), talk about gender as normative or non-normative, and drag as the performance that points to the artificiality of gender, but what of an everyday masculinity that incorporates feminine practices? What of the *calabai* (male-bodied woman, South Sulawesi) who walks with a swaying feminine gait but when s/he is accosted by a man is ready to protect h/erself by fighting if necessary (Davies 2007)? How to address the complexity of subject positions that queer gender? I want to push theories of gender subjectivity further to think how gendered individuals might take up subject positions that move back and forth across the ideological boundaries of normative sex/gender systems.

A first step to make sense of tombois' performance of both masculinity and femininity is to examine the concept of personhood within the Indonesian context. The Western idealized concept of self as an autonomous, cohesive and integrated entity that distinguishes one from all others differs from notions of personhood in Indonesia, where one is defined by one's kin ties and community of origin, as well as age, social status and rank. One's social position and behavior are relative to the person with whom one is interacting. Further, the variety of kin terms by which one is denoted signifies the contingency of self and the toleration of discontinuity. In this context personhood is never something finally achieved in the sense of a coherent, fixed identity.

The notion of personhood as contingent, that is, not fixed but relative, dependent on something else or a prior condition, points to the contextual, not just the multiple aspects of subjectivity. The relational aspect of tomboi subjectivities suggests that maintaining family relations is as important as the gender one expresses. Dedi may be a pragmatist who recognizes the difficulties of long-term relationship ('relationships always end') but family relations are highly valued as far as s/he is concerned. At the same time that Dedi expresses very strong feelings for h/er girlfriend ('she is everything to me'), s/he does not see any contradiction between those feelings and h/er feelings for family ('family stays number one'). Bringing this view of contingent selves together with the concept of body knowledge suggests that tombois' subject positions, conditioned by the material effects of particular spaces and gendered expectations, are experienced in relation with others and in relation to the logic of feeling, or embodied knowledge, that structures tombois' sense of being.

Tombois' feelings of reluctance (segan) and desire to avoid being seen in ways that would embarrass their families can be situated as a particular way of, in this case, expressing filial love through acknowledgement of parents' concerns. It can also be interpreted as a continuing claim on the benefits of that relationship. In this manner tombois enact a certain version of femininity that maintains family ties and the sense of belonging that such ties offer.

By identifying tombois' masculinity as contingent masculinity, I am not suggesting that it is a partial masculinity or an intermediate gender identity. Tombois' masculinity is one of many versions of masculinity in Southeast Asia that transgress normative categories of "woman" and "man," in this case through an explicit referral to and performance of feminine and masculine behaviors. Tombois also strategically manipulate cultural gender codes of femininity to create space for themselves and their partners. Tombois speak of having female bodies and doing feminine things while at the same time they declare that they are the "same as" or "just like" men. By situating tombois' masculinity as contingent, I offer a concept of masculinity that takes into account the social relations and cultural frameworks within which people live to make sense of their self-understandings.

Tombois contain or possess a sense of self that is both masculine and feminine, depending on the context, a product of social relations and cultural practices that are valued and necessary to their sense of well being. Tombois move back and forth between different ideologies and meanings, between the world of kin and community and the lesbi world, movement that produces different but equally valued feelings. Anzaldúa's (1987) concept of mestiza consciousness has implications for this interpretation of tomboi praxis. She argued that living in the borderlands is not simply about balancing two opposing forces, it requires developing a tolerance for and sustaining contradiction and ambiguity. This sense of plurality, of sustaining ambiguity, helps to understand tombois as cultural operators who embody seemingly conflicting feelings, of being men, loving women, and being loyal to their kin, without negating any of those feelings.

Tombois' body knowledge, which is expressed as feeling right, or awkward, or uncomfortable in particular social interactions, produces rich and complicated responses that require a rethinking of gender beyond notions of polarity or authentic identity. Tombois rely on these feelings as markers and signposts of who they are. This body knowledge, which attests to the rightness of one's self-positioning, may be exactly what confirms one's gender and being.

Tombois in Padang take up and embody differing and sometimes contrastive subject positions in different contexts. Their positionality may be different than other men but at the same time it does not mean they feel less masculine or manly. Their ongoing interpretation of and responses to the weight of embodied feelings are dependent on the particular social contexts or spaces in which these feelings arise. For tombois, as for all genders, the boundaries are blurred. There is no "real" man or "real" woman, as Butler (1990) cogently argued, that tombois mimic or reject but something much more complex. The complexity and contingency of gendered subject positions, as expressed by tombois, negates the "naturalness" of binary categories and self-contained bodies. It asks that we see ourselves not as simply "men" and "women" but as people whose identities are multiple, ambiguous and contingent.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Parts of this chapter were developed from material published in "Trans-Identities and Contingent Masculinities: Being Tombois in Everyday Practice," *Feminist Studies* 35(3), 2009.

## REFERENCES

Anzaldúa, Gloria, 1987 Borderlands / La Frontera: The New Mestiza. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

Besnier, Niko, 2002 Transgenderism, Locality and the Miss Galaxy Beauty Pageant in Tonga. American Ethnologist 29: 534–566.

Blackwood, Evelyn, 2010 Falling into the Lesbi World: Desire and Difference in Indonesia. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1990 The Logic of Practice. Richard Nice, trans. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Butler, Judith, 1990 Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. New York: Routledge.

Cromwell, Jason, 1999 Transmen and FTMs: Identities, Bodies, Genders and Sexualities. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Davies, Sharon Graham, 2007 Challenging Gender Norms: Five Genders among the Bugis in Indonesia. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Donham, Don L., 1998 Freeing South Africa: The "Modernization" of Male-male Sexuality in Soweto. Cultural Anthropology 13(1): 3–21.

Errington, Shelly, 1990 "Recasting Sex, Gender, and Power: A Theoretical and Regional Overview." *In* Power and Difference: Gender in Island Southeast Asia. Jane Monnig Atkinson and Shelly Errington, eds., pp. 1–58. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Farquhar, Judith and Margaret Lock, 2007 Introduction. *In* Beyond the Body Proper: Reading the Anthropology of Material Life. Margaret Lock and Judith Farquhar, eds., pp. 1–16. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Kulick, Don, 1998 Travesti: Sex, Gender and Culture among Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Manalansan, Martin F., IV., 2003 Global Divas: Filipino Gay Men in the Diaspora. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Ortner, Sherry B., 2006 Anthropology and Social Theory: Culture, Power, and the Acting Subject. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Reddy, Gayatri, 2005 With Respect to Sex: Negotiating Hijra Identity in South India. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Sinnott, Megan, 2004 Toms and Dees: Transgender Identity and Female Same-sex Relationships in Thailand. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
Valentine, David, 2007 Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Wieringa, Saskia E., Evelyn Blackwood, and Abha Bhaiya, eds., 2007 Women's Sexualities and Masculinities in a Globalizing Asia. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

## ADDITIONAL READINGS

Blackwood, Evelyn and Saskia E. Wieringa, eds., 1999 Female Desires: Same-Sex Relations and Transgender Practices Across Cultures. New York: Columbia University Press.
Green, Jamison, 2004 Becoming a Visible Man. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.
Herdt, Gilbert, ed., 1994 Third Sex, Third Gender: Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History. New York: Zone.
Jacobs, Sue-Ellen, Wesley Thomas, and Sabine Lang, eds., 1997 Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality and Spirituality. Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press.
Johnson, Mark, 1997 Beauty and Power: Transgendering and Cultural Transformation in the Southern Philippines. Oxford: Berg.
Newton, Esther, 1972 Mother Camp: Female Impersonators in America. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.
Parker, Richard, 1999 Beneath the Equator: Cultures of Desire, Male Homosexuality, and Emerging Gay Communities in Brazil. New York: Routledge.
Peletz, Michael G., 2009 Gender Pluralism: Southeast Asia since Early Modern Times. New York: Routledge.

# CHAPTER 12 GENOMICS
## *Embodying Molecular Genomics*

*Margaret Lock*

> "A man's future health and happiness depends on conditions that are already in existence and can be exposed by the oracles and altered. The future depends on the disposition of mystical forces that can be tackled here and now. Moreover, when the oracles announce that a man will fall sick… his 'condition' is therefore already bad, his future is already part of him."
>
> (E. E. Evans-Pritchard 1937)

From time immemorial divination has been an integral part of the everyday lives of humankind. Whether its practice involves an examination of the entrails of sacrificed birds and animals, consultation with oracles in trance-like states, or sessions with one of any number of kinds of fortune-tellers, divination produces knowledge not readily available to ordinary people – knowledge that has the potential to incite action. Historical and anthropological research suggests that a primary objective of divinatory proceedings is to provide explanations for what has already taken place, for it is in the reconstruction of past events that causes of misfortune are uncovered and moral responsibility is assigned, indicating what action should be taken (Seremetakis 1991). However, divination does not simply link the past with the present; disclosing omens for the future is also integral to these practices.

With the rapid accumulation and dissemination of findings from molecular genetics, genomics, and epigenomics (literally: over the genome, see below) a new form of divinatory space has arisen with the possibility of creating a highly potent zone of anxiety about what the future may have in store for the health of individuals and families. Moreover, this evolving ability to bring "potential futures into the present" (Rose 2007: 19) means that in theory every one of us is made over as "pre-symptomatically ill" because we all are susceptible to one or another condition as a result of our genetic

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

heritage (Yoxen 1982: 144). It is perhaps tempting to think that having one's genes named by an expert will bring about greater insight into future probabilities than do fables told by fortune-tellers but, paradoxically, the more we learn about the universe of molecular biology, including interactions among genes and their environments, the activity of genomes as a whole, and about developmental biology, the more it becomes clear that, for virtually all common conditions, *on their own*, genes are only rarely powerful agents in disease causation.

Even though *at times* genetic technologies permit us to speculate with much more precision than was formerly the case about who may be struck with misfortune, a characteristic feature of all forms of divination nevertheless remains – namely, that in seeking to take control of the future new ambiguities and uncertainties are inevitably made apparent (Whyte 1997). Furthermore, knowledge about individual genetic embodiment raises questions about the significance of bodily substance for relatedness across generations. Yet another important matter concerns agency and responsibility for ill health. Location of agency with respect to conditions thought of as "inherited" has changed over time, and currently is undergoing a further significant transformation that can usefully be thought of as a major paradigm shift. It is assumed today that genes are implicated either directly or indirectly in all biological processes, whether "pathological" or "normal," and that there are virtually no conditions in which heredity is not to some extent implicated. But it is also now acknowledged among virtually all geneticists that factors at the cellular level other than genes regulate the actual expression of genes, and therefore profoundly modify their function *in situ* (such research is often glossed as epigenetics). Moreover, with relatively few exceptions, gene–gene interactions and environmental factors external to the body profoundly modify the expression, and hence function, of any given gene (epigenomics). These emerging insights have profound implications for the location of agency with respect to disease causation and, furthermore, for social science theorizing and empirical research in connection with the social ramifications of making known individual molecular embodiment.

This chapter commences with a cursory discussion of the transformations in meaning that the concept of "heredity" has undergone since the latter part of the 19th century. Concomitant shifts in ideas about agency, embodied risk, and the naturalization of kinship are noted. In the following section selected research findings are presented about the social ramifications of information derived from genetic testing and screening. The final section presents ethnographic research in connection with genetic testing for Alzheimer disease to illustrate how findings in genomics and epigenomics have repercussions for the notion of the "embodied genetic body" conceptualized by social scientists. It will be argued that a concept of "molecular embodiment" can usefully be added to the lexicon of social scientists.

## From Heredity to Postgenomics

Prior to the 18th century, comments about similarities and differences between offspring and their parents were expressed in terms that reveal how nature and nurture were understood as *inseparably entangled* with one another. These comments very

often took the form of precepts, that is, injunctions about conduct as being natural and appropriate or otherwise. In the first half of the 19th century the idea of "heredity" began to gain currency in connection with reproduction, first introduced into biological circles by French physiologists, and then later expanded upon by Francis Galton and his cousin Charles Darwin, among others. Darwin invented the term "gemmules" to account for a mechanism of heredity *below* the level of the cell, but it was at once apparent to these 19th-century researchers that they were confronted with an oxymoron: on the one hand were the so-called "hereditary dispositions," clearly omnipresent within any given species that accounted for continuity and "sameness" and, on the other hand, reproductive differences were everywhere manifest, and already made use of extensively in plant and animal breeding. Once the theory of evolution was postulated the startling idea that heredity is both timeless *and* contingent was undeniable – a finding that Staffan Müller-Wille and Hans-Jorg Rheinberger describe as the " 'epistemic space' of heredity" (2007: 3–25).

Gabriel Gudding has argued that the "delamination of genotype from phenotype" in the early part of the 20th century fundamentally altered the precepts of the body, and continues to profoundly influence how we think today (Gudding 1996). It was the eminent Danish scientist Wilhelm Johannsen, eager to put theories about the biology of inheritance on a sound scientific footing, who argued forcibly in the early 1900s for recognition of a distinction between structure (the genotype) and its expression (the phenotype). Johannsen insisted that earlier ideas about inheritance were not only outmoded, but also wrong. In making this claim, he would become recognized as the founding father of the *science* of genetics, and set himself apart from his predecessors, among them Gregor Mendel, Francis Galton, and August Weismann, all of whom assumed that personal qualities and behaviors are transmitted directly from generation to generation. A remarkable rethinking about the concept of embodiment began to take place at this time, with a shift in assumptions concerning the location of agency and morality away from individuals and onto genes themselves.

Johannsen deliberately likened this new genetics to the "hard" science of chemistry, and H.E. Armstrong, a well-known chemist writing in the 1930s wrote: "some day, perhaps, biography will be written almost in terms of structural chemistry" (Gudding 1996: 528). Thus was the stage gradually set for an era that came to be dominated by what is now known as the dogma of genetic determinism. This dogma was consolidated by the mid-20th-century discovery of the structure of DNA, the final proof, it was assumed, of the reality of units of inheritance – the "gemmules" or genes – that were henceforth allotted fearful agency in disease causation. The Human Genome project, designed explicitly to expose the *structure* of the sequencing of the DNA base pairs in the human genome, was the culmination of this approach.

Although some outspoken scientists, James Watson among them, apparently assumed that once we had this map in hand we would in effect have a full understanding of how genes work and of what makes us human, it was evident even before the map was complete, perhaps to the majority of involved scientists, that we were in for some major surprises. Another ontological shift can be detected in the second third of the 20th century in which a good number of researchers began talking and writing about DNA rather than genes; at the same time, the very idea of the gene became disconcertingly fuzzy for many – a point to which I will return.

## Revealing the Genetic Body

Over the past two decades social scientists have been busy documenting certain of the transformations taking place in society as a result of emerging knowledge in molecular genetics. In the early 1990s the epidemiologist Abby Lippman coined the term "geneticization" to gloss what she perceived to be a new form of medical surveillance likely to come about as a result of the new technologies of genetic testing and screening. Lippman characterized geneticization as a process "in which differences between individuals are reduced to their DNA codes" (Lippman 1992). Above all, she was concerned about the possibilities for a reinforcement of racism, social inequalities, and discrimination against those with disabilities as a result of a rekindled conflation between social realities and an essentialized agential biology grounded in small differences in DNA sequences.

Nikolas Rose, drawing on Foucauldian biopolitics, suggests that in advanced liberal democracies, where life is "construed as a project," values such as autonomy, self-actualization, prudence, responsibility, and choice are integral to "work on the self." He argues that genetic forms of thought have become "intertwined" into this project, and the merged language of genetics and risk "increasingly supplies a grid of perception that informs decisions on how to conduct one's life, have children, get married, or pursue a career" (Rose 2007: 125). In other words, we are today assailed by a modern set of precepts and the "good life" potentially becomes one of "optimization." Rose adds, however, that there is little evidence to date that an individual labeled as genetically at risk is reduced to a "passive body-machine that is merely to be the object of a dominating medical expertise" (Rose 2007: 129). In other words, despite a widely shared understanding held until recently among both scientists and the public that genes determine many bodily conditions, individual agency is nevertheless attributed with importance. In the case of severely debilitating and lethal conditions, such agency is accomplished inter-generationally by means of fetal genetic testing and resort to selective abortion – a practice described by some as neo-eugenics.

However, it is estimated that only between 15 and 20 percent of adults designated at risk for a named genetic disease, or for carrying a fetus believed to be at risk for a genetic disease, have been willing thus far to undergo genetic testing. This finding has held for over ten years (numbers vary from country to country and differ according to the disease in question (Beeson and Doksum 2001; Quaid and Morris 1993)). It has also been shown that a good number of people when tested ignore or challenge the results (Hill 1994; Rapp 1999). No doubt this situation exists because uncertainty, disbelief, doubt, and kinship concerns color people's responses to test results in connection with the majority of so-called genetic disorders. But worry about social discrimination, loss of insurance coverage and possible employment difficulties also contribute to the reluctance of many people to consider testing (Apse et al. 2004).

Further concerns arise because the material manifestations of genetic mutations are highly varied: when thinking about genetic testing, decisions depend greatly upon the age of onset of the disease in question, what are its phenotypical manifestations, and whether or not reproductive decision-making is implicated. A positive test for a gene rarely means that the severity of the condition with which it is associated can be reliably predicted, or even if symptoms will actually manifest themselves. For by far the

majority of single-gene disorders, there are few if any preventive measures to be taken, and no treatments are available. It is not surprising, then, that reluctance and ambivalence appear as the dominant responses to the possibility of learning about individual embodied risk. However, there are signs that with expanding commercialization of genetic testing, increased numbers of people are seeking it out.

It is of note that, to date, anthropologists have almost exclusively researched rare single-gene disorders affecting approximately 2 percent of the human population. This situation by no means diminishes the worth of such research, the findings of which have repercussions way beyond each disorder considered, but nevertheless is of significance.

## Of Moral Pioneers

Rayna Rapp's classic 1999 ethnographic study of the social impact of amniocentesis exposes many of the problems associated with genetic testing that continue to be of fundamental concern today. Amniocentesis is a technology used primarily to detect Down syndrome as well as several rare inherited disorders. A good number of women interviewed by Rapp, including some who were well educated, misunderstood what they had been taught. And even when the import of counseling was correctly internalized, making a "rational" decision about termination of a wanted pregnancy raised an array of difficulties. Some people express disbelief about the accuracy of the testing; others are concerned because amniocentesis can induce pregnancy loss; some believe that Down syndrome is not a reason to abort a fetus and, among these people, several are particularly concerned because the test tells them nothing about severity of the phenotype. Others, believing that they themselves have a healthy lifestyle, do not accept that their fetus is at risk for the syndrome.

Religious beliefs also play a part in decision-making, as do family economics, the reproductive experiences of extended family members, and attitudes to disability in general. In some families, the pregnant woman is made to feel responsible for the "problem" having arisen in the first place. Rapp describes women who have been tested as "moral pioneers" because they are expected to make rational decisions about abortion of wanted pregnancies, when in reality they are confronted with complex, heartrending decisions that have repercussions way beyond individual agency or desire. Carole Browner (2007) found that when Hispanic women appeared to be vacillating about agreeing to a genetic test, clinicians tended to forge alliances with the male partner, if present, whom they assumed would be more able to see reason than would the woman.

The majority of researchers have shown that when genetic information is incorporated into accounts about illness causation such knowledge supplements rather than replaces previously held notions about kinship, heredity, and health. For example, writing about Huntington disease, a single-gene disorder that becomes manifest only in adults, sometimes very late in life and for which there is no known treatment, Cox and McKellin (1999) make it clear that lay understandings of heredity conflict with Mendelian genetics, because the scientific account does not assuage the feelings of families dealing with the lived experience of genetic risk. These authors argue in a similar vein to Rapp: "theories of Mendelian inheritance frame risk in static, objective terms. They abstract risk from the messiness of human contingency and biography."

These authors conclude that test candidates and their families jointly engage in a "complex social calculus of risk" that is fluid, contingent and inter-subjective (Cox and McKellin 1999: 140).

People who come from families with Huntington disease vacillate about testing, sometimes for many years, in part as a result of the uncertainties involved about age of onset, and because no treatment exists. Furthermore, it is now known that the presence of a Huntington disease gene does not fully determine the expression of the disease, as was formerly believed to be the case. Today, when people from Huntington families are tested, a small number will be told that their test results are equivocal and no clear prediction can be made. This situation applies to a good number of other single-gene disorders. The biopolitics of genetic risk is riddled with estimations that gloss over irresolvable uncertainties embedded in rapidly changing knowledge about molecular genetics.

Monica Konrad (2005) draws on ethnographic research to depict "the making of the 'pre-symptomatic person.'" She too uses Huntington disease as an illustrative example, and is at pains to emphasize what happens in families where some people choose to be tested and others refuse. Inspired in part by anthropological research into divination, Konrad explores the "prophetic realities" unfolding in contemporary society as a result of genetic technologies. Konrad, like Rapp, is concerned with "moral decision-making" and her emphasis is on how, when bodies are made into oracles, "moral systems of foreknowledge" thus produced are enacted both within and across generations. Her work, like virtually all social science research on genetic testing, makes it abundantly clear that the assumptions common in bioethics of a "right to know" and of individual autonomy and agency in connection with decision making about genetics is extremely problematic. She discusses at length the "pragmatics of uncertainty" that infuse the everyday lives of people living with genetic foreknowledge and, further, the new forms of "relational identity" that testing brings about that include how and when to inform one's children of one's own test results; whether to be entirely "truthful" or not, should the children be tested and, if so, when. Value is associated with the idea of kinship, the very ties of which are medicalized as a result of genetic testing or simply the prospect of testing, thus accounting for why "affectively charged kinship talk" (Konrad 2005: 145, see also Finkler 2000) consistently dominates gene talk.

The sociologist Nina Hallowell interviewed women in the United Kingdom who come from families where cancer is very common and who were undergoing testing at a specialty clinic for the BRCA genes associated with increased risk for breast cancer; without exception she found that these women believed that it was their duty to themselves and to their children to undergo testing. Moreover, many women who had already borne children believed themselves to be responsible for having unknowingly put their children at risk (Hallowell 1999). On the basis of these findings, Hallowell argued that women, more so than men, are likely to develop feelings of "genetic responsibility" – that is experience an obligation to undergo testing and reveal the results to kin.

Kaya Finkler interviewed women who come from families designated as "at risk" for breast cancer, some of whom had undergone genetic testing. She describes how these women become "perpetual patients" while healthy. Her findings document a zone of chronic anxiety that individuals and families are liable to inhabit as a result of

accumulating knowledge about specific genes (Finkler et al. 2003). However, as Finkler notes, such anxiety is partly induced by media hype.

The above discussion illustrates how knowledge about genes can initiate or else inhibit action, and increase, reduce, or transform anxiety about genetic embodiment. But does such knowledge produce what might be called an embodied "genetic subjectivity"? And is there a tight looping effect (Hacking 1995) between genetic disclosure and transformation in subjectivity? Are people *consumed* by the idea that they *are* their genes? Or is genetic knowledge most commonly absorbed into pre-existing beliefs about risk to self and family, as the majority of the social science research suggests? Clearly the age of onset of the disease in question and whether or not the condition is lethal will determine to a great extent how people respond. So too will the uncertainly associated with the action of the gene itself – its "penetrance" in the idiom of molecular genetics. In addition, other factors, including possible job loss, religious beliefs, and marital and reproductive status are implicated.

Virtually all research into the social repercussions of genetic testing has been carried out in North America and Europe. Although not an inordinately expensive technology, genetic testing has only relatively recently been introduced into less well off countries. Duana Fullwiley carried out ethnographic research in connection with attitudes towards genetic testing in Senegal, West Africa, where this technology was introduced several years ago (Fullwiley 2004). She points out that Senegalese physicians with whom she talked assume that women do not want to be tested for sickle cell because abortion is not acceptable in this Muslim population and, furthermore, Wolof "tradition" encourages women to have many children. Although the majority of women interviewed cited religion as a major influence on their thinking Fullwiley found that, even among those opposed to abortion, some thought that testing would be helpful in order to know what the future had in store for them. Others considered that testing of male partners might give women just cause to divorce unsympathetic or disagreeable husbands. Several thought that reluctant young women might be able to avoid entering a marriage arranged by the family in which it was proven with testing that children could be born homozygous for sickle cell disease. Those women who agreed that selective abortion would be acceptable often cited Moslem teaching that states prior to "ensoulment," embryos are simply "life." After a period of gestation when ensoulment takes place, embryos become "human life" and not merely "life": only then is abortion considered as murder.

Fullwiley found that the principle matters that concern families when discussing genetic testing include "recent family history and present family character, spiritual conviction and religious interpretation, marital problems and familial pressure to resolve them, and the social obligation to raise healthy children" (2004: 160). These convictions, although clearly local in kind, are strikingly similar to narratives elicited by anthropologists working in the West in that the wellbeing of the family and not merely individual concerns is implicated in justifying genetic testing and being prepared to take action to terminate a wanted pregnancy.

Space does not permit a detailed discussion of the term "genetic citizenship," that is, political and social action taken by groups of individuals whose families have a shared vulnerability to specific, rare, single-gene disorders (Taussig et al. 2003). Similarly, "biosociality," a term created by Rabinow to signify how individuals would likely form social affiliations with others with whom they share genotypic characteristics (Gibbon

and Novas 2008; Rabinow 1996), cannot be adequately set out here. Both these concepts have stimulated a great deal of valuable anthropological research that graphically illustrates links between individual genetic embodiment and social and political action that can bring about new group formations. This research, in common with the studies cited above, makes it clear that knowledge about embodied genetics, whether discerned on the basis of shared phenotypic appearance, genetic testing, or else by means of sophisticated microarray analysis of DNA samples, often incites action designed to transform the futures of self and other. On the other hand, many individuals, because of the inherent uncertainties associated with the action of specific genes, opt to do nothing. In addition, many more people anticipate unwanted social and political fallout in connection with health-care provision, notably in the United States.

The above findings give some indication about the way in which people respond to revelations about genetic embodiment in connection with disorders in which rare, often devastating, genetic mutations are implicated. Such mutations clearly possess formidable agency as non-human actors, so much so that in the middle of the last century geneticists created a dogma of genetic determinism that has exerted a profound influence on professional and public thinking about disease causation in general until the present time. In retrospect, the era of genetic determinism now appears to many scientists to be an aberration, albeit an enlightening deviation, but one with severe limitations.

## Coming to Terms with Susceptibility Genes

Findings that resulted from mapping the human and other genomes forced considerable reflection in the world of genetics and genomics. Above all, the discovery that humans have approximately 30,000 genes (many fewer than had previously been estimated), whereas less complex organisms – notably certain plants – often have many more, was a great surprise, and a cause for some humility, perhaps! Furthermore, it is now clear that many genes encode for more than one protein, and that these proteins frequently function in a variety of different contexts; while the great majority of genes do not encode for proteins at all. A further remarkable insight made it evident that gene expression is by no means always a unidirectional process and, moreover, the part played by non-coding RNA, some of which is composed of viral genetic material, is of enormous significance to the production of life and to conditions of health and disease. Moreover, as noted above, it is manifestly evident that multiple factors including events both internal and external to the body enhance or inhibit gene activity. What is more, certain molecular events that initially took place over the course of evolutionary history have profound effects on individual bodies to this day, and interact with the unique developmental life-cycles of individuals. These and other crucial insights have, in effect, overthrown the dogma of determinism that was dominant until the beginning of this century. This model has proved entirely inadequate to account for the molecular and cellular activity currently being made visible in laboratories worldwide.

The molecularized universe, more complicated and exciting than most people had imagined, is entirely in consort with postmodernity, a landscape littered with a pastiche of shape-shifters – including so-called smart genes, jumping genes or transposons,

pseudogenes, silent mutations, and so on – an environment of the unexpected, in which boundaries formerly thought to be stable do not reflect material reality. These findings raise red flags for the worth of genetic testing for many common conditions. Even so, a good number of clinican / researchers hope such tests will shortly be in routine use, once the cost comes down to under $1,000 for an individual genome.

## Epigenetics: Beyond Genetic Determinism

The philosopher Lenny Moss has pointed out an enigma evident in the natural sciences that periodically comes into stark relief whenever conceptual ground begins to "shake or shift." The problem is how to account for the "apparently 'purposive' nature of the living organism in the purely mechanistic terms of our post-17th-century understanding of nature. Even more vexing, he argues, is the question of "how to locate ourselves – the purposive, flesh-and-blood investigators – within the conceptual framework of our biological inquiry" (Moss 2002: 219–220). Moss identifies a continuum along which strategies for coping with this enigma can, in theory, range. At one end lies full-blown preformationist theory in which The Creator determines all (genetic determinism is essentially a form of preformationism). In Moss's opinion, René Descartes fell closer to the other end of the spectrum – one of pure epigenesis, in which "ostensibly purposive life-forms were spontaneously generated from inert matter" (p. 220), although many of Descartes' followers were unable to make the break with preformationism. Moss concludes that neither of these extremes has been of direct relevance for biological investigation over the past 100 years; investigators have come to an uneasy agreement that both genes themselves and levels of interaction higher than the gene are involved.

Along similar lines, philosopher Paul Griffiths notes: "it is a truism that all traits are produced by the interaction of genetic and environmental factors [but] the almost universal acceptance of this view has done little to reduce the prevalence of genetic determinism – the tendency to ignore contextual effects on gene expression and the role of non-genetic factors in development." (Griffiths 2001: 1). Moss agrees, noting that the idea that living matter can organize itself into a "self-sustaining, self-organizing, boundary-maintaining entity" has been difficult to establish in the face of the apparent attractiveness of genetic determinism. Demands that the door be opened to fundamentally different conceptions of the organism, in which the genome is situated *in* a living organism, have been repeatedly rebuffed (see also Oyama et al. 2001).

Those who work in this lively field of epigenetics are forging a new approach in which genetic determinism plays no part. Space does not permit a detailed summary of current epigenetic theories; suffice it to say that the very word epigenetics has more than one meaning. Many argue that the discipline is not new, and existed by the 1940s or even earlier, although others disagree with this position (Jablonka and Lamb 1995: 82). Most current research into epigenetics focuses on the expression and regulation of genes. For example, questions posed about the phenotype ask why monozygotic twins do not always manifest the same diseases and, when they do, why the age of onset can differ by up to two decades. This narrowly conceptualized epigenetic approach immediately makes the limitations of genetic determinism patently evident.

A broader approach to epigenetics, known by its adherents as "developmental systems theory" (DST), is currently gaining ground. A mix of philosophers of biology and research biologists who support this approach argue that epigenetic phenomena should be recognized as acting on genes, at times having interdependence with them, and at other times having independence from them. The starting point of the DST approach is an ontological reversal of genetic determinism, and gives priority to dynamic interactions among very many variables, allowing for numerous possible outcomes. Barnes and Dupré, sociologist and philosopher of science respectively, ask what this means for the usual assumption made by geneticists that complex organisms grow from a single fertilized egg – the process known as ontogeny:

> The life sequence of an organism is a series of cell divisions, differentiations, and deaths. What does this imply about the nature of the organism? Is each organism produced anew by the process of ontogeny, or does an ever-present organism merely develop and change in the course of the process? The first formulation equates the organism with its final form. The second assumes that the organism is there throughout, present as whatever material object exists at any stage of development. This [latter] alternative recognizes organisms as constantly changing entities, not the outcomes of a line of development from A to B but entities traveling round an unending cycle of forms. On this view, organisms should be understood as life cycles. (Barnes and Dupré 2008: 21)

These authors note further: "instead of being spoken about as independent atoms of hereditary material, genes, conceptualized as DNA, are now referred to as parts of the chemical / molecular systems within the cell" (2008: 50). DNA is not simply involved with heredity; one now has to ask what does DNA do throughout the life-cycle?

The biologist Scott Gilbert argues by extension that the DST approach implies that " 'self' is a permeable self. We are each a complex community, indeed, a collection of ecosystems" (Gilbert 2002: 213). Contingency is the name of the game. Furthermore, it is recognized by DST researchers and many others working in genetics and genomics that genes do not have clearly demarcated beginnings or ends; nor are they stable, and only very rarely indeed do they determine individual phenotypes or the biological make up of future generations. Quite simply, then, genes are not us and the gene can no longer pass as the fundamental animating force of human life.

The molecular biologist Richard Strohman poses the following question: "if the program for life is not in our genes, then where is it?" He notes that many of his colleagues have been arguing quietly for a long time that "there is no program in the sense of an inherited, pre-existing script waiting to be read." Rather, he argues, "there are regulatory networks of proteins that sense or measure changes in the cellular environment and interpret those signals so that the cell makes an appropriate response" (Strohman 2001: 4–7). This regulatory system, a "dynamic-epigenetic network," has a life of its own, so to speak, with rules that are not specified by DNA.

## Epigenomics

Systematic research into epigenetics and the larger field of epigenomics (the global analyses of epigenetic changes across the entire genome), is just beginning to take off and, although knowledge about genetics and genomics plays an indispensable role in

this type of research, ultimately the objective is directed towards explaining what it is about heredity, health, and illness that genes, or even gene–gene interactions, alone cannot explain. A widely cited example of the epigenomic approach is provided by findings that have accumulated for over half a century in connection with what is known as the Dutch famine of 1944. Thirty thousand people died from starvation as a result of a Second World War German food embargo resulting in the complete breakdown of local food supplies and adding to the misery of an already harsh winter. Birth records collected since that time have shown that children born of women who were pregnant during the famine not only had low birth weights but also exhibited a range of developmental and adult disorders later in life including diabetes, coronary heart disease, breast, and other cancers. Furthermore, it has been shown that this second generation, even though prosperous and well nourished, themselves produced low birth weight children who inherited similar health problems (Harding 2001; Lumey 1992).

These findings strongly suggest that expression of specific DNA sequences has been repressed due to a radically reduced nutritional intake during pregnancy, and that this effect has persisted in ensuing generations. It is now known that the observed changes are the result of molecular processes that take place at specific sites at the cellular level, the best known of which is called methylation. It has been convincingly demonstrated that environmental variables can alter this complex process, and that it is possible for the changes that result to be inherited independently of DNA. These "epigenomic" findings are currently attracting a great deal of attention among researchers (Szyf et al. 2008) and have opened the door to what is being described positively by some as neo-Lamarckianism. Increased knowledge about methylation and other key processes in the cell are beginning to make clear some of the crucial mechanisms involved in dynamic epigenetics and, furthermore, reveal compelling evidence for recognition of the indivisibility of human activity and material environments both micro and macro through time and space – a process described by Lock and Nguyen (2010) as "biosocial differentiation."

However, as Strohman makes clear, scientists are currently suspended between paradigms: genetic determinism is a failed paradigm, he argues (although the majority of involved scientists quite possibly disagree with him), and research into dynamic epigenetics and epigenomics is only just taking shape – in short, we are betwixt and between, and the current generation of scientists, especially when they work in alliance with the corporate world, have, for the most part, been trained for and remain firmly embedded in a deterministic framework. And yet, Craig Venter is on record as commenting that genes cannot possibly explain what makes us what we are, and similarly, Strohman (2001) insists that while the Human Genome Project did indeed tell us a great deal about our genome, it told us nothing about who we are and how we got this way.

Interpretations of this kind bring us firmly into the realms of anthropology and philosophy. One fundamental question that arises is whether or not DNA can be thought of as exhibiting "agency" or independent "activity" – concepts that Neumann-Held and Rehmann-Sutter (2006) argue are in any case thoroughly anthropomorphic. However, although epigenetics and epigenomics have moved the focus of inquiry away from DNA as preformationist, and many researchers recognize what might be termed a "distributed molecular agency," their focus remains concentrated

on microenvironments within the body leaving it, it seems, to social scientists to deal with broader questions of social and political agency.

In her book *The Century of the Gene* Evelyn Fox Keller sums up where she believes we now stand:

> Genes have had a glorious run in the twentieth century, and they have inspired incomparable and astonishing advances in our understanding of living systems. Indeed, they have carried us to the edge of a new era in biology, one that holds out the promise of even more astonishing advances. But these very advances will necessitate the introduction of other concepts, other terms, and other ways of thinking about biological organization, thereby loosening the grip that genes have had on the imagination of the life sciences these many decades. (Keller 2000: 147)

Keller, although she agrees that the concept of the gene is "good enough" for many experimental purposes, concludes that it is time to think about adopting new concepts to bring about timely insights into the workings of living systems. It is also apparent that interpretation of findings about genetic embodiment as revealed by testing for susceptibility genes demands critical attention.

## Divining Genomic Futures

It is estimated that approximately 4,000 single-gene disorders affect the human population. However, without exception, these disorders are rare. By far the majority of active DNA segments in the human genome function as "susceptibility genes." Such genes contribute to basic bodily functioning although, under specific circumstances, certain variations of such genes *may* contribute to disease causation. However, their presence in the human body is neither necessary nor sufficient to *cause* disease. One such gene is the ApoEε4 associated with increased risk for late-onset Alzheimer disease. This gene is one of three globally distributed variations of the APOE gene, essential for cholesterol metabolism. Findings from interviews with individuals who were informed about their ApoE genotype as part of a randomized controlled trial carried out in the United States give a glimpse of possible futures filled with uncertainty should genetic testing for susceptibility genes become routinized.

The human subjects in this trial (N = 442) come from families where one or more individuals have been diagnosed with Alzheimer disease, but they themselves are healthy. The brief commentary below is based on qualitative interviews conducted approximately one year after the trial subjects had been informed of their APOE test results. When asked to recall their genotype, 75 percent of the participants had forgotten, mixed up, or were confused about it, and also about the significance of the risk estimates for AD that they had been given. This finding is particularly noteworthy because 91 percent of the informants stated that "wanting to know" their genotype was a major motivation for participation in the study (although making a contribution to research was of greater importance to most people). Even though most individuals could not recall their risk estimates accurately, nearly half had retained the gist of the information – often they were able to recall if they have a "good" or "bad" gene (Lock et al. 2007). The difficulty with this kind of language is that ApoEε4, like all susceptibility genes, is not an inherently "bad" gene. Research has shown that approximately

50 percent of people who have this genotype never get Alzheimer disease, and community-based studies suggest that the overall rate may be much lower than this.

On the basis of their age, family history, ApoE genotype, and gender, the majority of subjects in the study had been given estimates of an increased lifetime risk by age 85 of approximately 20 percent. Even the recollections of the six individuals who, because they are homozygous for the ApoEε4 allele, were given the highest risk estimates (an increased risk over a baseline population of approaching 60 percent by age 85) were not entirely reliable: only three were able to recall their genotype correctly, and a fourth remembered only that she has the "bad genes" and added: "I'm still totally confused, although I do know I have two of them, whatever those bad things are."

Among those who found out that their genotype has no ε4 allele in it (as did the majority of participants) Adele had the following to say: "According to that test, I don't have the risk, okay? So, technically I should feel better. But I don't believe it, given that there are four people in my family with the disease."

Adele has been taught as part of the obligatory education session she underwent that she does indeed have increased risk for AD whatever her genotype, because her relatives have the disease, but she may have forgotten or cannot come to terms with what she was taught.

Some people clearly express their confusion about the test results: "From one meeting to the next I would come in and I couldn't remember what my risk was. And to this day, I'm not 100 percent sure. But I know that it's elevated."

Others were explicit about their frustration: "Well, I know where I am at, where I stand. I can let my kids know where we stand. You know, I mean, maybe get it, maybe not."

The mean number of years of education for the majority of the participants in this trial is 17 years, although at one site it is 15 years. Low levels of accurate genotype recall are not due to intellectual shortcomings (or, for that matter, due to early signs of AD) but, rather, illustrate the way in which people often nest genotype information into their previous experience of AD in the family. Furthermore, because these individuals are middle aged and, for the majority, the increased risk estimate is negligible, even in old age, there is no logical reason why they should treat this information as singularly important or necessarily predictive of their future.

Furthermore, the concept of "blended inheritance," when people believe that they inherit a mix or blend of influences from each parent (Richards 1996: 222) often trumps genomic knowledge. Professionals involved with genetic testing regularly comment about the prevalence of such thinking among their clients, and such thinking is evident in this study too. Katherine said: "I showed you the picture of me and my dad. We look like clones, practically, physically. And nobody's really said–I don't know whether or not that makes a difference, a person's physical appearance. But I have a suspicion that it does." And Robert commented: "Do I think I have a higher than normal chance? Yes. Heredity. I'm so much like my mother, who had Alzheimer's. There's a very high likelihood that one or more of her children will have a predisposition toward it, and I would say I'm front-runner because of so many other characteristics that are very much like my mother's."

It is perhaps not surprising that when these interviewees discussed theories of causation, multi-causal explanations were common, and genetics did not dominate the exchanges. People held complex models about AD causation before participating in the trial, an understanding that was reinforced by the required education session,

when they were taught that the ApoE gene does not *cause* Alzheimer disease. Considering the cause of her father's illness, Caroline responded: "I can't pinpoint any one thing." And Ellen replied: "I think [genetics] plays a part, but I don't think that's all. I'm sure that a lot of the diet, and the health, and the exercise that we do today will prolong life and mental acuity."

Professional knowledge about late-onset AD is riddled with uncertainties that are becoming ever more marked in light of recent technological advances and postgenomic insights (Lock 2010). Many of the research subjects are exquisitely aware of these uncertainties, having made themselves lay experts on the subject of AD (Lock et al. 2007). Almost without exception, these informants appear pragmatic in the face of uncertainty, and believe that their family histories are of more relevance in predicting the future than are their genotypes, a position also taken by many clinicians working with AD families (Clarke 2009). For the majority, "gene talk" is simply incorporated into well-honed narrative accounts about AD in their families – with the result that the APOE gene is "familiarized" (Chilibeck et al. 2010), and hence tamed.

## Conclusions

It is increasingly evident that embodied risk calculated on the basis of susceptibility genotyping alone is an exceptionally crude and highly misleading exercise, akin to the more egregious forms of divination. Most susceptibility genes have much less predictive power than does the ApoE gene, suggesting that for the majority of complex diseases, even though knowledge about genotypes may well assist with research, decontextualized segments of DNA are unlikely to become powerful instruments for predicting future disease in individuals. This suggests that social activities associated with single-gene disorders, including those of genetic citizenship, biosociality, and the ripple effects among kin of test results for genes that are highly penetrant, will not be so evident when researching the social ramifications of shared knowledge about the genetics of complex conditions.

Epigenetic researchers argue that information about the condition of bodily cells and tissues as a whole, rather than simply the naming of genes, is likely to produce insights into risk for future disease but, equally, factors external to the body must be recognized as major contributors to molecular embodiment. Demonstrating the inextricable entanglement of human activities – social, cultural, historical, political, and economic – with molecularized, epigenomic bodies will be an enormous challenge. Such research will slowly expose the ceaseless activities of biosocial differentiation, a process to which genes contribute, but by no means determine outcomes. Molecularized embodiment is not predetermined by DNA segments characterized as genes, rather, it is produced and reproduced as a result of ceaseless interactions in time and space that transcend individual bodies and individual lifetimes.

## REFERENCES

Apse, Kira, Barbara B. Biesecker, Francis M. Giardiello, Barbara P. Fuller, and Barbara A. Bernhardt, 2004 Perceptions of Genetic Discrimination Among At-Risk Relatives of Colorectal Cancer Patients. Genetics in Medicine 6: 510–516.

Barnes, Barry, and John Dupré, 2008 Genomes and What to Make of Them. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Beeson, Diane, and Teresa Doksum, 2001 Family Values and Resistance to Genetic Testing. *In* Bioethics in Social Context. B. Hoffmaster, ed. pp. 153–179. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Browner, Carole, 2007 Can Gender "Equity" in Prenatal Genetic Services Unintentionally Reinforce Male Authority? *In* Reproductive Disruptions: Gender, Technology, and Biopolitics in the New Millennium. M. Inhorn, ed. pp. 147–164. New York: Berghahn Books.

Chilibeck, Gillian, Margaret Lock, and Megha Sehdev, 2010 Postgenomics, Uncertain Futures and the Familiarization of Susceptibility Genes. Social Science and Medicine doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2010.01.053.

Clarke, Angus, 2009 Musings on Genome Medicine: The Value of Family History. Genome Medicine 1: 75.

Cox, S. and W. McKellin, 1999 "There's This Thing in Our Family": Predictive Testing and the Construction of Risk for Huntington Disease. *In* Sociological Perspectives on the New Genetics. P. Conrad and J. Gabe, eds. pp. 121–148. Oxford: Blackwell.

Evans-Pritchard, E. E., 1937 Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic among the Azande. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Finkler, Kaja, 2000 Experiencing the New Genetics: Kinship and Family on the Medical Frontier. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Finkler, Kaja, Cécile Skrzynia, and James P. Evans, 2003 The New Genetics and Its Consequences for Family, Kinship, Medicine, and Medical Genetics. Social Science and Medicine 57: 403–412.

Fullwiley, Duana, 2004 Discriminate Biopower and Everyday Politics: Views on Sickle Cell Testing in Dakar. Medical Anthropology 23: 157–194.

Gibbon, Sahra and Carlos Novas, 2008 Biosocialities, Genetics and the Social Sciences: Making Biologies and Identities. London and New York: Routledge.

Gilbert, Scott F., 2002 The Genome in Its Ecological Context: Philosophical Perspectives on Interspecies Epigenisis. Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences 981: 202–218.

Griffiths, Paul E., 2001 Developmental Systems Theory. *In* Nature Encyclopedia of the Life Sciences. London: Nature Publishing Group.

Gudding, Gabriel, 1996 The Phenotype/Genotype Distinction and the Disappearance of the Body. Journal of the History of Ideas 57: 525–545.

Hacking, Ian, 1995 The Looping Effects of Human Kinds. *In* Causal Cognition: A Multidisciplinary Approach. D. Sperber, D. Premack, and A. J. Premack, eds. pp. 351–383. Oxford: Oxford Medical Publications.

Hallowell, Nina, 1999 Doing the Right Thing: Genetic Risk and Responsibility. Sociology of Health and Illness 5: 597–621.

Harding, J. E., 2001 The Nutritional Basis of the Fetal Origins of Adult Disease. International Journal of Epidemiology 30: 15–23.

Hill, Shirley A., 1994 Managing Sickle Cell Disease in Low-Income Families. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Jablonka, Eva and Marion J. Lamb, 1995 Epigenetic Inheritance and Evolution: The Lamarckian Dimension. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Johannsen, Wilhelm, 1911 The Genotype Conception of Heredity. American Naturalist 45(531): 129–159.

Keller, Evelyn Fox, 2000 The Century of the Gene. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Konrad, Monica, 2005 Narrating the New Predictive Genetics: Ethics, Ethnography, and Science. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lippman, Abby, 1992 Led (Astray) by Genetic Maps: The Cartography of the Human Genome and Human Care. Social Science and Medicine 35: 1469–1496.

Lock, Margaret, 2010 Dementia Entanglements in a Postgenomic Era. Science, Technology and Human Values doi:10.1177/0162243910388022.

Lock, Margaret, Julia Freeman, Gillian Chilibeck, Briony Beveridge and Miriam Padolsky, 2007 Susceptibility Genes and the Question of Embodied Identity. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 21: 256–276.

Lock, Margaret and Vinh-Kim Nguyen, eds., 2010 An Anthropology of Biomedicine. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Lumey, L. H., 1992 Decreased Birthweights in Infants After Maternal in utero Exposure to the Dutch Famine of 1944–1945. Paediatric Perinatal Epidemiology 6: 240–253.

Moss, Lenny, 2002 From Representational Preformationism to the Epigenesis of Openess to the World? Reflections on a New Vision of the Organism. *In* From Epigenesis to Epigenetics: The Genome in Context. Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences 981: 219–230. New York: New York Academy of Sciences.

Müller-Wille, Staffan and Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, 2007 Heredity Produced: At the Crossroads of Biology, Politics and Culture, 1500–1870 Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Neumann-Held, E. M. and C. Rehmann-Sutter, 2006 Genes in Development: Rereading the Molecular Paradigm. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Oyama, Susan, Paul E. Griffiths and Russell D. Gray, 2001 Cycles of Contingency: Developmental Systems and Evolution, Life and Mind. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Quaid, Kimberly A. and Michael Morris, 1993 Reluctance to Undergo Predictive Testing: The Case of Huntington's Disease. American Journal of Medical Genetics 45: 41–45.

Rabinow, Paul, 1996 Artificiality and Enlightenment: From Sociobiology to Biosociality. *In* Essays on the Anthropology of Reason. pp. 91–111. Princeton: University of Princeton Press.

Rapp, Rayna, 1999 Testing Women, Testing the Fetus: The Social Impact of Amniocentesis. New York: Routledge.

Richards, Martin, 1996 Lay and Professional Knowledge of Genetics and Inheritance. Public Understanding of Science 5: 217–230.

Rose, Nikolas, 2007 The Politics of Life Itself: Biomedicine, Power, and Subjectivity in the Twenty-First Century. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Seremetakis, Nadia C., 1991 The Last Word: Women, Death, and Divination in Inner Mani. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Strohman, Richard C., 2001 A New Paradigm for Life: Beyond Genetic Determinism. California Monthly 111: 4–27

Szyf, Moshe, Patrick McGowan and Michael J. Meaney, 2008 The Social Environment and the Epigenome. Environmental and Molecular Mutagenesis 49: 46–60.

Taussig, Karen-Sue, Rayna Rapp and Deborah Heath, 2003 Flexible Eugenics: Technologies of the Self in the Age of Genetics. *In* Genetic Nature / Culture: Anthropology and Science Beyond the Two Culture Divide. A. H. Goodman, D. Heath, and M. S. Lindee, eds. pp. 58–76. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Whyte, Susan Reynolds, 1997 Questioning Misfortune: The Pragmatics of Uncertainty in Eastern Uganda. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Yoxen, Edward J. 1982 Constructing Genetic Diseases. *In* The Problem of Medical Knowledge: Examining the Social Construction of Medicine. P. Wright and A. Treacher, eds. pp. 144–161. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

CHAPTER 13

# HAPTICS
## *Haptic Creativity and the Mid-embodiments of Experimental Life*

*Natasha Myers and Joe Dumit*

> "…a subject only becomes interesting, deep, profound, worthwhile when it resonates with others, is effected, moved, put into motion by new entities whose differences are registered in new and unexpected ways."
>
> (Latour 2004: 210)

Henri Bergson's (1991) *Matter and Memory* animates a theory of perception based on 19th-century physiology. In this work Bergson bundles perception and movement together in the nervous tissue of the body, exploring how affect and responsive action are produced through a "kind of motor tendency in a sensory nerve" (1991: 55–56). Through Bergson, and Deleuze's reading of him, we've been lured to attend to the affective sensibilities acquired by researchers at work and play in their laboratories. We've begun to see their bodies as *excitable tissues* for gathering up the energetics and movements of the world, and manifesting these as perception, affect, and action (Myers 2006). In this chapter we find affinities among the practices of biologists who visualize living cells through time-lapse media, and those of geologists who work with data models of earth formations in virtual reality environments. As they work with responsive media, these researchers' articulate gestures and movements remind us of protein crystallographers and biological engineers whose modes of embodiment are continually reconfigured as they build and use models of protein molecules (see Myers 2007 and n.d.). Myers has found that molecular modelers' responsive bodies are attuned to subtle molecular forces and affinities; they hitch rides on the molecular movements they model and allow these intricate forms to inflect

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

their gestures and affects. Modelers *transduce* these affects through their body-work and propagate these gestures through performative articulations that excite others into action. In this sense, entire research collectives become *excitable media* with the capacity to collect up and relay nuanced molecular affects. And as we turn our attention to the visualization practices of geologists and cell biologists, we learn new things about excitability and embodiment in experimental practice.

In this chapter, we present our collaboration working as anthropologists of experimental forms of life. We examine fieldsites where practitioners develop and use computerized visualization technologies. In the process we aim to collaborate with scientists and artists as they reflect on their practices and interpret their experiments. In addition to cell biologists, geologists, protein crystallographers and biological engineers, we have worked with PET scan brain imagers (Dumit 2004), dancers and installation artists. Here we focus on two researchers who are involved in intensive investigations with relatively new technologies. One is Dan Hijiko (pseudonym), who inquires into cell movement through live-cell imaging, and the other is Dawn Sumner, a geologist who engages her data in a 3D immersive environment known as the CAVES, for "Computerized Active Visualization Environment."

We have conducted an extended set of interviews with Dan at the east coast research university where he works. We observed his public talks and his contributions to meetings with interdisciplinary researchers, as well as his classroom lectures in biological engineering courses and in a course that Joe teaches on comparative visualization techniques called "Visualization Across Scientific Disciplines." In each case we were interested in Dan's approach to visualization and how he acquired his skills working with organisms, instruments, data, and stories.

We currently spend time with geologist Dawn Sumner as she engages her data in the KeckCAVES (http://keckcaves.org) 3D immersive environment at the University of California, Davis. This interdisciplinary collaboration between earth scientists and computer scientists aims to develop new visualization techniques to improve scientific interpretations. KeckCAVES provides an environment for collaborative research, teaching, education, and mentoring in the use of interactive visualization methods for understanding geological processes and human interactions with the natural environment. Its core facility is a CAVE, which consists of 3 walls and floor with stereoscopic displays providing full 3D images, head-tracking to render perfect stereo for the viewer, and a six-degrees-of-freedom (6-DOF) tracked input devices for interaction with the data. According to its users, research in the CAVES has already transformed the geologists' practices and insights, but this transformation has been difficult for them to express in their scientific publications.

Rather than enumerating the differences between these sites, the distinct kinds of instruments, data, questions, and objects that circulate within them, we are interested in affinities. The two practitioners in this study are constantly reworking their technologies while they develop and test their hypotheses. Both engage their technologies to get entangled *kinesthetically* and *affectively* with their data. In practice, they transform these technologies into *responsive media*, and in so doing, they maximize their opportunity for what we are calling "haptic creativity." Each fieldsite teaches us new things about experiment, and holding them together we can begin to observe more generally the morphing modes of embodiment and excitability that constitute experimental forms of life.

In our work with these researchers we pay attention to how they produce, play and replay time-lapse movies and explore 3D models at different spatial and temporal

scales; we keep pace with them as they keep pace with phenomena that unfold at different tempos and rhythms; and we stay with their prevarications, repetitions, and hesitations as they try on different narrative forms to render time-based events sensible. We also pay close attention to how, in their responsive experimental environments, they explore new analogies and metaphors in an often-playful manner.[1]

What we find in both sites are experimentalists caught up in prolonged encounters with their data, instruments and stories. They are in the midst of things: caught up in moments of not yet knowing. The relations between scientist and object loop in the form of ongoing, iterative, overlapping becomings. By beginning our accounts from inside their experiments it is possible to show how these experimentalists' data, instruments, and bodies and identities are continually reconfigured within their apparatuses. We show how these researchers spend significant portions of their time figuring out *what it might be possible to know* in the context of their experiment. What we offer, then, is an anthropological phenomenology of those sometimes fleeting, sometimes prolonged moments that arise in the middle, mid-thought or mid-gesture. This paper thus tracks this constantly morphing tangle of bodies, instruments and objects that we call the *mid-embodiments of experimental life*.

## Leaning Into The Data

> *"Is not being moved, or rather, put into motion by the informants exactly what we should mean by an enquiry?"*
>
> (Latour 2005: 48)

Dan Hijiko, a cell biologist and biological engineer, stands up in front of an audience made up of an odd assortment of anthropologists, historians, nuclear engineers, physicists, architects, and life scientists. We are all participating in a series of NSF-funded workshops examining how computer visualization has changed the dynamics of different professional fields including biology (see Turkle et al. 2005; Turkle 2009). Dan is here to talk about his contributions to innovations in light microscopy and cellular dynamics. Like many of his colleagues, he uses confocal microscopes to image living cells in their three-dimensional thickness and to follow them through time; and like others, he homes in on particular molecules of interest by tagging them with fluorescent proteins that light up under ultraviolet light. He stands in front of a screen illuminated by a looping time-lapse video of a large, seething cell pulling itself across a sheer surface. It is a macrophage: a white blood cell whose actions are central to the body's immune response.

The cell is translucent against a mottled grey surface. As its leading edge extends, it reaches outwards and pulls itself along with a rippling motion forming protrusions and invaginations. The cell pullulates with activity: a thin layer at its leading edge billows and bubbles, while the material in its middle ingathers and swarms in eddies. As the cell pulls itself forward, it leaves long strands of its body tethered to the surface. These get stretched to a thinness and then rapidly indrawn as the cell advances onwards. Dan sets up his talk for his audience: "This is a story about how our bodies develop – during development, during embryogenesis. It is a story of how cells move. And cell movement is very like a rock climber, where the rock climber inches his or her way up a rock face, usually by fingertips creeping up some sheer rock wall."

As he begins to tell the story, he lifts his arms high up above his head, and rises up on his toes. The camera-person recording this performance has not anticipated the largesse of Dan's movements and his arms extend right out of the video frame. Dan suspends himself here as he continues to describe how the rock-climbing cell gets its grip: It is "stabilized by some little purchase on some little deformity on the surface." He comes down from his perch and presses his hands, palms down, to create an image of a stable surface. "And that's basically how a cell moves."

The cameraperson clues in to the dynamics of Dan's movements and starts to follow him as he tacks back and forth from his computer where he is running a PowerPoint presentation, to the projection screen. Dan moves to the screen: "You can see it here in these videos. Where, this is a cell moving forward. It pushes its membrane out as the macrophage advances forward." With his eyes fixed on his audience, he stands next to the projection screen and stretches his arms out in the direction of the cell's movement, moving with the cellular motion to emphasize the push of the membrane.

He releases this gesture to continue: "But in order for motion to occur there has to be some sort of friction generated. And here you see at the leading edge of the cell are these zones of dots which continually appear as the cell moves forward." He sweeps his left arm upwards to show his audience where to look. "And these dots are basically adhesions that the cell makes literally pulling itself forward as it's moving."

To show how the cell pulls itself forward, he again stands parallel to the screen and extends his arms and hands out in front of his body. But this time he situates himself directly in the beam of light emanating from the LCD projector. Looking into the light, towards his audience, he extends his arms out and up, and ripples his fingers to follow the direction of the cell's movement. He casts a dancing shadow on the screen. Like his looping video, he repeats his shadow puppet show as he talks, and even turns his head to take in the full effect as his arms and hands animate the pull of the cell's adhesions.

As he pulls his body into play to dance with the projected light, he makes visible the otherwise invisible integuments that entangle him with his data, his instruments and the stories he tells. Indeed, in this performative medium he is able to articulate quite effectively just how he is entangled inside of his inquiry into cellular life. This demonstration shows his audience how he leans into cell movement and how he gets swept up – *kinesthetically* and *affectively* interpolated – into a story of cells as rock climbers whose finger-like adhesions fumble to get a grip on some sheer surface. Dan, the cell, and the rock-climbing story all gain purchase in this performative moment. And as such, the otherwise hidden aspects of this experimental form of life come into view.

We begin our analysis from the premise that there is more going on in this scene than one charismatic scientist trying to persuade his lay audience through theatrical gestures. In other words, we push past the assumption that this scene can be interpreted through theories that analyze scientific truth-making as a self-consciously staged performance (See Herzig 2004; Hilgartner 2002; Mol 2002). Historians of science pay extraordinary attention to carefully choreographed scientific demonstrations and public displays as they try to make sense of how scientists corral assent and secure validation for their experimental findings. Their analyses of "gentlemanly modesty" or theatrical bravura have brought renewed attention to bodies, gender and affect in scientific truth-making (e.g. Shapin 1994; Shapin and Schaffer 1985). And

yet, feminist theorist and historian of science Rebecca Herzig (2004) has shown how these analyses have tended to take for granted the bodies of the scientists and the materialities of their experimental apparatuses. In the process, scientists' bodies are treated as an ontological ground and self-evident source of agency. With Herzig, we are on the lookout for ways of theorizing performances, like Dan's, in ways that make visible how bodies and materialities are precisely what is *in formation* and at stake. We look to feminist science studies scholar, physicist, and philosopher Karen Barad's (2003, 2007) renewed approach to *performativity* and the ongoing materialization of bodies and meanings in science. Barad models science as an "intra-active" practice through which matter and meaning, subjects and objects, experiment and phenomena are always in the making.

For example, in a performative reading, the looping video cannot be treated as a stand-alone representation of the cell; in addition to the laborious experiments that were able to materialize cell movement in video, this clip is just one part of a wider scene that includes Dan's stories and movements, the projected light, the screen, and the audience. The overall effect is a performative rendering: an *enactment* of cellular life (Barad 2003; Mol 2002). This approach helps us see how, in this elaborate dance with his data, Dan is becoming a scientist, the cell is becoming an object, and the rock-climbing story is becoming a scientific hypothesis, all right before our eyes.

Moreover, through this frame, we also begin to appreciate the shifting, tentative, and precarious nature of the scientist, his object, and his story. In this performance, Dan is both inside and outside the story he is telling; he is simultaneously the observer, the rock climber, and the cell. The stories, like the rock-climbing cell and the others we discuss in this paper, gain their purchase, their foothold, only fleetingly. For example, the rock-climbing cell is a story that never makes it into print. In an early publication, Dan tells another story to animate the cell at a molecular scale. He homes in on and traces the relationship of tiny dots and blobs at the membrane surface calling them "mother" and "daughter" adhesions. Eventually this story too falls by the wayside, replaced in later publications with other terms and stories. In this sense, Dan's cell stories are labile and shape-shifting: the characters in the story keep morphing; the scale keeps telescoping; the subjects and objects vacillate. He shows us how his stories loop from a space of unknowing into insight, and how new stories and new insights are constantly in the making. We treat Dan's stories, therefore, not as descriptions of phenomena, so much as interventions through which new phenomena are materialized.

Dan shows us how scientific storytelling is a process of inserting and orienting oneself inside a phenomenon, and playing through possible narratives. As Dan's fingers crawl with the cell as it pulls itself across the screen, he is instructing his audience in how to see and how to feel cell movement. In a performative reading, he is both attuning our attention and materializing new phenomena. But he is also experimenting. By trying on the movements of cells and rock climbers, he is feeling his way into cell movement and so testing his hypotheses. In other words, his stories are not just images or thought experiments, they are kinesthetically and affectively informed *body-experiments* on their way to becoming scientific hypotheses (see Myers 2007 and n.d.). He moves his body to learn to ask new questions and grope towards insight. In the process, the story and the looping video begins to pull him in as much as they pull in his audience.

Rather than treating his gestures as stage-managed choreographic moves, we pay attention to how he innovates through his movements. He is not rehearsing well-known concepts; Dan is in this moment creating new insight through his kinesthetic stories. Rather than resembling a choreographed score, this performance is closer to a movement practice known as "contact improvisation," where two or more dancers engage in a tacit conversation, experimenting with the push and pull between bodies, and playing dynamically with tension, weight, and gravity. It is a viable metaphor to capture the improvisational play as bodies (human, nonhuman and machine) and meanings get made inside experiments. This is an example of the improvisational, exploratory aspect of scientific experiments that we call *haptic creativity*.

Dan is clearly *moved* by the moving cell that he is tracking, and also by each story that he is telling. Entrained to these subtle movements, he has learned how to *move with and be moved* by cellular life. Through intensive training, his body has become an *excitable tissue* capable of sensing and transducing the molecular practices of cells (Myers 2006). And his animating gestures have become means through which he can both conduct body-experiments to hypothesize about how cells and molecules move, and to propagate cell-inspired stories to his colleagues and students. As he shares his insight with this audience, we in turn *must move with and be moved by him* in order to learn how to see and feel how this cell moves.

## Experimental methods

> *"In science, if you know what you are doing, you are not at the cutting edge. So, if you are at the cutting edge, you don't know what you are doing. You don't know what you are going to find. You don't know what the nature of the problem that is sitting in front of you truly is. And you need to develop ways to refine the problem. And that often involves technology. I mean there is a classic feeling among cynics in science that goes: 'That which is doable is not worth doing. And that which is really interesting and worth doing is not doable.' Well the idea is to make the really interesting doable by bringing to those problems the new technologies and the new thinking. And not to be discipline bound. To be able to transcend the different disciplines. And it also makes science fun."*
>
> (Nobel Laureate Richard Axel, X-ray crystallographer, Columbia University, Interview available for view on the website for the 2009 documentary *Naturally obsessed: The making of a scientist*, see http: // naturallyobsessed.com)

Experimentation is a risky enterprise: experiments do not promise ease and assurance; they are unpredictable, uncharted "labyrinths" (Rheinberger 1997: 74). For Hans Jörg Rheinberger, experimentation is a tacit, embodied practice of "groping" through dark spaces of not knowing. Experimenters must be agile as they navigate between extended periods of disorientation and moments of insight. In this process, new objects, new questions, and new modes of experimentation come into view. Nothing is stable, including the end products of experiments: scientific images, models, and animations are themselves open reading frames, and enlist many in locally negotiated and contestable interpretations (Lynch and Woolgar 1990).

We want to understand how Dan Hijiko and Dawn Sumner inhabit their computationally responsive instruments and navigate their labyrinthine experiments. Take the

by now well-known example of the "Visible Human Project." This was a data-set built up from the sequential imaging of thin cryosectional slices through a frozen cadaver (see Waldby 2000). These images were stacked, coded and adjusted in order to reconstitute a three-dimensional data-set that could be accessed as a virtual body. Computer scientists, animators and medical professionals are using the data to render bodies virtually and make available digital surrogates for anatomical investigations. This data set has been mined and reconstituted for various training purposes using a range of interactive modalities (Johnson 2007; Prentice 2005). In the mode of the 1966 classic *Fantastic Voyage*, viewers can fly through the recesses of a virtual body on guided tours that take the form of, for example, a virtual colonoscopy. The Visible Human can be sliced and sectioned, or its layers peeled back to generate different ways in. This virtual body can be worked over with multiple logics, and the effect of different optical possibilities is the materialization of differently rationalized interiorities. The data-set is thus a digital archive for anatomical improvisation that, with extensive amount of labor, one could ask: what would a cut here reveal? What would I see if I pulled away the skin here?

As we watch geologists torque their bodies to manipulate their data sets in CAVES, we observe a similar embodied relation between the experimenter and their data. Their movements are provocations, questions that they pose inside their data-set: What if I try this? Or this? What can I see now? They don't only inquire into their objects; their questions are also aimed at their instruments. They continually test and assess the robustness of the visualization software and the data structure; they invent new forms of data manipulation; or demand different parameters from the programmers. As a result they generate new techniques for collecting and assessing their data, including new ways of talking about what they are finding. These are contexts in which their experimental techniques and modes of inquiry are still in the making.

Our aim is to document the "forms of life" (Fischer 2003; Helmreich 2008) alive inside experimental systems that engage responsive media. "Experimental systems" is a concept we modify from Hans-Jörg Rheinberger. In his account, experimental systems are "the working units a scientist or a group of scientists deal with." They are:

> …simultaneously local, social, institutional, technical, instrumental, and above all epistemic units. [A]n experimental system [is] a unit of research designed to give answers to questions we are not yet able to ask clearly…a device to materialize questions. It cogenerates, so to speak, the phenomena or material entities and the concepts they come to embody. (Rheinberger 1997: 287–8)

We are interested in the *in betweenness* of Rheinberger's formulation, this "cogeneration" of phenomena and concepts. And in addition to the social, institutional, technical, and epistemic dimensions, we reflect on the formation of scientists themselves in this generative encounter. A scientist's modes of embodiment and sensibilities are also inextricable from an experimental system, and this is especially true in systems that make use of interactive and time-based media. Experiments that use computationally responsive media such as CAVEs or the time-bending technologies of live-cell imaging ensure that the relations between the experimentalist, their data, and their instruments remain in flux. Questions posed with such interactive media

allow the observer to reorient herself continuously. In the process of posing exploratory questions, the relations between experimentalist and object get continuously reworked and reconfigured.

## Embodiment, Experimental Agency, and the Middle Voice

> *"Meaning and matter are more like interacting excitations of non-linear fields – a dynamic, shifting dance we call science."*
>
> (Barad 1996: 188)

Anthropologists of science, technology, and medicine have made the call for a cultural phenomenology of embodied experience (Csordas 1994; Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987). They have resisted approaches to living bodies that flatten them out into abstracted objects or objectified abstractions. Rejecting the *mise en abyme* of representations, they have opened up inquiry into the liveliness of being-in-the-world. Merleau-Ponty offers a generative approach for reinvigorating a phenomenological anthropological of science. He asserts, "bodies are … the ground of perceptual processes that *end* in objectification" (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 362; cited in Csordas, 1994: 7). We take this formulation as a positive description of the creative process of experimentation. From this vantage point, objects, concepts and representations are merely what precipitate out of the experimental scene in science. This phenomenological approach to experimental forms of life has oriented our attention to scientists whose experiments get them caught up what Barad (1996) describes above as a lively "dance" between meaning and matter. These scientists are caught in the midst of an active struggle for what can only at the end of the experiment be called "objectification."

And yet, bodies must never be taken as self-evident grounds for knowledge. With Deleuze, who moves with Spinoza (Deleuze, 1988), we must continually remind ourselves that we still *don't know what a body can do*. To keep answers to this question open, we must keep pace with these experimentalists as they get tangled up in their experiments, their stories, and their technologies. What we have learned is that embodiment vacillates for experimentalists. We know this because we can observe moments when they are *in between embodiments*; that is, we can track them *in the midst of* acquiring a habitus. Thus, with attention to the partial, incomplete, and labile nature of embodied relations in experiments, we enter into our inquiry not knowing in advance what we will find. We couple the question of "what can a body do?" with the question "what can an instrument do?" In the process we observe the ongoing making of subjects and objects inside experiment. We make the claim that an experimentalists' habitus is necessarily temporary, makeshift, and tentative.

Take an example from another site of our fieldwork: a geologist leans sideways, looking up as she twists her elbow to reposition the wand she is using to track the leading edge of a rock projection. She's half-crouching in a CAVE. She's wearing stereo goggles that flicker in tandem with projection screens, making three walls and the floor appear to be a space filled with rock structures. Her head-tracking device adjusts the projections so that she can "touch" the 3-D data-set in precise locations, rotate and enlarge structures, define and color surfaces, and make measurements. As

so many other scientists seem to do when they start interacting with their data in the CAVES, she is clearly playing with the images. She is lured into and caught up in the data as she tunnels into its depths. At the same time, she has come to this project with prior goals of rendering the complex structure quantifiable, so that the data can be made available as graphs and charts (Lynch 1988). According to Dawn: "The ease of measurement means that measurement is limited by the decision of where to measure rather than the mechanics of actually making the measurement – this can be seen by the hesitation of the user in this example (Sumner 2007).

Following Karen Barad, we recognize that act of measurement conditions what the data and objects of knowledge will become inside the experiment (1996, 2007). And yet, we want to pay attention to a related phenomenon: the ambivalence of the experimenter's relation to the data. As the geologist reaches out and hesitates, not knowing yet what or where or how to measure, we observe both her subjectivity and the objectivity of the phenomena wavering. The scientist is no longer the architect or choreographer in this experiment. There is no well-mapped experimental method: experimenter, instrument, data, and phenomena are all in the making. The result is that there are no clear-cut subjects or objects, until the final proof is rendered. In this geologist's hesitation, therefore, everything is at stake: the experiment, the instruments, the data, the phenomena, her lived perceptions, and her status as a scientist.

In immersive 3D one uses a mouse-like object to engage computers through screens; there is a tendency to describe this engagement with the term "interactivity." This term has become ubiquitous in human–computer interaction research, and in the process rendered self-evident. But movement and performance artist Susan Kozel, who experiments with media like CAVES, suggests that this term is incorrect. Through her practice she is closely attuned to the unpredictability of experimental forms of life, and has learned first-hand that the experimentalist is not in control of the experiment. Indeed, one of her experimental findings is a critique of interactivity that calls into question the directionality and source of agency inside experiments:

> Purposive decision making covers a certain range of actions of the autonomous agent, but is a construction of agency generous enough to include other states and actions? The acts of listening, prevaricating, meandering, stumbling, thinking, reassessing, and hesitating; the states of confusion, uncertainty, frivolity, intimacy. Agency might be spread across a range of human modalities, distributed across bodies and across materialities. (Kozel 2007: 186–187)

Kozel's account allows us to make a distinction between intentional control in which one knows the outcome in advance, and another mode of engagement that takes more time; one that embodies a relation to time that does not seek to reduce it to a minimum. This wandering, wavering and indeterminate form of experimentation is what she calls "responsivity" (2007: 182). She experienced a constant slippage of control between her body and the technologies in a rhythmic but unequal exchange of activity and passivity that she describes as a prolonged and iterative "initiation and response and response and response" (2007: 202). What we find useful in this definition of responsivity is a phenomenological insight into the intra-activity of improvisation, and the escalation of excitations that ignite creative insight.

With this invitation to rethink agency in experimental systems, an artist and experimentalist herself, Kozel enters into the fray of ongoing debates about the distribution of agency across bodies and materialities, humans and nonhumans, material-semiotic actors and technologies entangled in experimental forms of life (see, for example, Barad 1996; Callon 1986; Haraway 1997; Latour 2005; Pickering 1993; Suchman 2007; Thompson 2005; Wei 2002). While STS scholars Karen Barad (2007), Charis Thompson (2005) and Andrew Pickering (1995) have developed important concepts like "intra-action," "ontological choreography" and the "dance of agencies", these very dynamic descriptions don't necessarily speak to the actual movements of bodies and the relation between movement, feeling, and meaning. Indeed, we are drawn into these particular fieldsites by the dancing bodies and stories of experimentalists. More than just intra-action, responsivity generates a kind of "intra-animacy" (see also Myers 2006). In other words, responsivity keeps moving bodies in motion and in the process of making meanings. Excited bodies produce animated affects, gestures, and stories. And this is the source of the liveliness that thrives in the encounters we document.

How does this responsivity manifest in our fieldsites? How do experimentalists talk about their experiences? How might we recognize responsivity when it is happening? What we've noticed is that even though they feel like their technologies have transformed everything – how they see, feel, and know – experimentalists have trouble communicating their insights to others. They speak in a voice that is challenging to decipher. Ludwig Fleck, doctor, researcher and autoethnographer of scientific practice, described discovery as a "relationship of active, living intervention, a reshaping and being reshaped, in brief a creation" (Fleck 1979: 48, cited in Rheinberger 2010: 29). This scientist's relation to experiment and discovery is not easily parsed. Listening very closely to the embodied language of improvisation and insight reveals something other than an active ("I moved it") or passive voice ("It was moved by me"). In those voices, the subject is exterior to the action, whether an active agent or the passive nonagent. By contrast, Fleck and Rheinberger reach toward what has been called a "middle voice." This is where the subject is interior to and affected by the action being signified by the verb.

The middle voice is a grammatical form lost to most present languages (Benveniste 1971). It is sometimes assumed to be "in between" the active and passive voices, like a reflexive subject acting on herself. But contemporary linguists argue that it is a form that predates the passive voice. They suggest that even the reflexive voiced "I moved myself" still preserves a separation of one's will from one's body. The middle voice was originally opposed to the active voice, and situated the subject intimately in the unfolding action. The subject of the middle voice is *affected* by the verb, interested or invested in the process, and often transformed in the doing of it (Klaiman 1991; Saeed 2003: 170–174). The scientist conducting an experiment becomes *scientist* as she is "reshaping and being reshaped" in the experiment. These are examples where "the subject performs or experiences the action expressed by the verb in such a way that emphasizes the subject's participation" (Cline 1983).

We invite ethnographic engagement with this middle voice, which inflects the tacit and embodied processes of scientific insight we find in our fieldwork. These processes are already clearly evidenced in the work of anthropological, historical, science studies, and especially feminist accounts of science and knowledge making, through concepts like "intra-activity," "co-production," "performativity," "historiality,"

"emergence" and "actor-networks." And while in these analyses the actors are recognized to have stakes in their experiments, what we want to foreground is how the actors are *themselves at stake*. We are interested in the scientists' *affective entanglements* with their objects and instruments and the ongoing transformation of their modes of embodiment inside of their experiments. This is evident in how carefully invested (body, mind, career) researchers are in the reception of their data *as data*, and the reception of their modes of reasoning as scientific. The middle voice constantly refers back to the speaker, their actions and bodies, and brings with it a self-consciousness and reflexivity. Literature on the middle voice directs us to attend to "a heightened moral consciousness on the part of the subject performing it," drawing attention to the subject's concern and care and in the action that includes a care of the self and a care for the process (White 1992: 186, cited in Sandoval 2000: 56; see also a growing conversation in STS on care: Fortun 2005; Myers 2006; Puig de la Bellacasa n.d.).

In our use of grammatical definitions of "voice" we are in no way limiting our analysis to the linguistic or representational. Scientific speech, like writing, is not only material but embodied. Voice ushers forth from a body and is also a process of transforming one's body, of learning to embody. And when we do talk of representations like the live-cell image of the macrophage, we always include the bodies that have made them and which dance alongside them. A representation, in this sense, is only ever the end-point effect of an extensively laborious rendering process, and so it is always inflected by the bodies and affects of its makers and interpreters (see Myers n.d.). Treating representations as renderings, we can claim with Deleuze and Guattari that "representations are bodies too!" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 86). Where "embodiment" risks a tendency to naturalize and take for granted bodies as a kind of pre-existing substrate, we insist on partial and tentative mid-embodiments in such a way as to evoke the ongoing and never ending process scientists participate in as they search for a place to stand and speak about their findings.

A responsive body is one uncommitted to one mode of embodiment over another; it is willing to move with and be moved by another. And, as researchers improvise with their data, instruments, and stories, these mid-embodiments also suggest *an experiential and experimental* moment between Merleau-Ponty's two bodies, the lived (active) body and the objective (passive) body. This is clear in the example described above, where Dan is caught mid-embodiment. As he oscillates between becoming the rock-climbing cell and narrating himself in the third person, as a scientist pointing to a pre-existing cell, he is engaged in a process aiming toward objectification, but not quite making it there.

We want to inhabit the dynamic spaces indexed by these theories by pursuing a cultural phenomenology that can keep pace with these researchers as they waver between embodiments, and between confusion and insight. To do so we model our method on the approach of the experimentalist. In response to Latour's (2005) provocation, "Is not being moved, or rather, put into motion by the informants exactly what we should mean by an enquiry?" we offer what Fleck might call a "living intervention": we aim to move with and be moved by these experimentalists. They are no longer figured as our "informants"; rather, they have become more like partners in a contact improvisational dance, where we move together in a collaborative project that aims to evidence the *affective entanglements of inquiry*, more generally.

## Articulating The Excitable Habitus of An Experimentalist

> *"Observation, discovery, is always feeling one's way, that is, literally a reshaping of the object of knowledge."*
>
> (Fleck, 1979: 53)

> *"There was another thing in the embryology course that I took that was helpful, which was that they gave us a lump of clay and you know, we had to mold what we thought we were looking at and, you know, it's an important, this tactile component is a very important part because you can look at something and think, 'oh, I see the details and all that stuff' but your hand really betrays what your mind is actually processing and is actually noting."*
>
> Dan Hijiko

Dan realizes that observing, thinking and talking can seem straightforward, but what we think we see, and the concepts we use to describe an object, often turn out to be empty clichés. Seeing and discovering depend not only on finely tuned instruments, but also on a repertoire of creative possibilities supported by one's own sensory dexterities; these are one's own instruments for seeing and sense-making. In the words of movement trainer Barbara Adrian, "You will not realize your creative potential unless your functional skills can support your expressive impulses" (Adrian 2008: 23). And yet the instruments of our sensorium are not prosthetic objects we can pick up and wield like microscopes or telescopes. With Csordas and with Haraway we assert: "The body is agent, not resource" (Haraway 1991: 200). In what follows we rethink instrumental models of the sensorium through a theory of the responsive excitability of bodies. This helps us to account for how it is that experimentalists acquire new kinesthetic, affective, and conceptual dexterities as they engage in the process of learning to see, feel, and know.

Starting with these careful descriptions that draw us into research and expertise, we are intrigued by the potential for what Csordas calls a "*cultural phenomenology of embodied experience.*" We follow Csordas to move past a phenomenology of some universal subject and body in order to attend to specific scientists whose "bodies carry the social about inseparably with [them] before any objectification" (Csordas 1994: 287 and 270). We thus use Bourdieu's notion of a habitus as "a system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions" (Bourdieu 1969: xx) to orient our attention to the cultural subjectification of a scientist. Drawing on Omar Lizardo's recovery of the Piagetian roots of Bourdieu's concept, we see habitus as an ongoing action-generative and classificatory process, capable of producing "practical metaphors" through bodily operations (Bourdieu 1984: 173 in Lizardo 2004: 7). Articulating a habitus in experimentation starts with the scientist's previous dispositions and then requires sensitizing the experimenter's tissues to respond to excitations. This is a process of opening one's body towards new phenomena not yet knowing what they might be, and of conditioning the body to see, feel, know, and be affected by phenomena. We treat the experimental habitus of scientists, individually and in collectives, as excitable tissues inextricable from the tangle of forces that we still clumsily demarcate as "biology" and "culture."

Dan's mentor is recalled via such a habitus:

> There were mannerisms. So he would look at a picture and then he would hunch his shoulders forward and his eyes would sort of narrow and, you know, he would bring it close and he would sort of look and look and look and turn it upside down, you know, turn around to see it at all angles. And, he really thought that it was important to really observe all the details that a picture could show.

As Dan talks, his hands hold an invisible picture out in front of him and he leans forward with narrowed eyes, mimicking the mannerism of his mentor. In this moment Dan assumes Ted's bodily habits, and in so doing momentarily *articulates the habitus* of an apprentice. An apprentice, as Marcel Mauss (1935) has described, is one who models his comportment after his mentor's. Dan invokes his mentor's bodily techniques in order to evoke what he learned as a student: that looking and seeing are active processes. As he rotates the invisible picture in his hands he shows how microscopists must always keep their vantage point moving. By changing their relationship with the object, they keep opening up new views. Here Dan offers insight into his training, which involved acquiring both dexterities for seeing, and a capacity for improvisational reorientation in relation his data.

In their essay "The Fixation of (Visual) Evidence" (1990), Amann and Knorr Cetina suggest that, among the scientists (molecular biologists) they study, "the problem appears not to be, as Merleau-Ponty (1962: 78) said that 'what you see depends on where you sit,' but rather 'nothing is more difficult than to know exactly just what we do see' " (1962: 86). We want to push their claim further, and suggest that in addition to the difficulty of "knowing what you see," scientists are at the same time being faced with a new kind of challenge; this being that *nothing is more difficult to know than just where it is that you do sit*. An experimentalist's situatedness is precisely what is at stake.

Dan and Dawn demonstrate a reflexivity in their modes of seeing that is akin to what Donna Haraway calls a situated knowledge practice: one that hinges on embodied knowledge, limited locations and partial positioning (Haraway 1991). Indeed, once inside their experiments these researchers experience the dizzying effects of ongoing relocalization, reorientation, and the constant transformation of their modes of embodiment. These ongoing reconfigurations unfix relations and transform the politics of positioning between observer and observed. The key here is that these experimental systems show how a situated practice is precisely not about taking a seat and settling into a view from one location. Situated knowledge in the context of responsive media requires a dexterity tentatively inhabiting *mid-embodiments*; in other words, scientists must learn to dance with their data and instruments, and find ways keep pace with the rhythmic materialization of new modes of embodiment, objects, concepts, and phenomena.

Ted's lesson, which has been embedded in Dan's tissues all these years, was about how to keep one's body in motion in relation to an image, and how to lean into new views to generate new insights. Not surprisingly, Ted's techniques for training students to acquire deep visions and deep insight resemble those of a master painter instructing her student:

> He would ask me, "Well, what do you see?" and I would describe it and then he would say, "Well, you know, there's that, and then did you notice this?" And so what I saw was obviously the top level of detail, you know, the most basic kind of thing. And then he was

> like, "it's like unpeeling an onion." He would just go one level and one level and one level, and he would go deeper and deeper and deeper. … I also took a zoology embryology course where we had to collect gametes from those animals … fertilize the eggs and watch them develop and we would have to draw them.
>
> Now, you know, you could take an egg and you could just draw it as a circle and I remember when I showed my professor that he said, "Well, Dan you didn't spend too much time looking at that egg did you?" and I said, "Well, what do you mean?" He said, "Well, you go back to that microscope and spend about a half an hour and see how that egg looks after about a half an hour and just draw, add in more detail." And he was right, you know, you just sort of look and then there's graduations and color and texture and then you see. You start noticing that the surface isn't really smooth and there seems to be some things located near the edge of the cell and some things in the middle.

Through this long process of training, Dan eventually acquired the dexterity to notice new things. In other words he could start to discriminate minute differences in color and texture that he couldn't see before. In Bruno Latour's (2004) terms, Dan was in the process of becoming *articulate*: "An inarticulate subject is someone who whatever the other says or acts always feels, acts and says the same thing… In contrast, an articulate subject is someone who learns to be affected by others – *not by itself*" (Latour 2004: 210).

An articulate subject can get excited by the details of an object and recognize phenomena that an inarticulate subject cannot register. As Dan shows us, this capacity to be affected is acquired over time. The effect is that one sees more than one saw before, not only because one is learning to see, but also because one is *inventing a new mode of seeing*. This is a creative mode of attention, "introducing difference into the very idea of sensation" (Rajchman 2002: 16 cited in Kozel 2007: 251). This mode or mood of "going the next level in" literally draws out an actual, a sensorial difference and a conceptual one, from what is now felt to have been virtually there. Articulate bodies, capable of being affected are excited into responsive encounters with their objects; they *create* intra-actively.

> And yeah, that's what I mean about going the next level in detail. And so, you know, I think I got the best training as a scientist right at that point, because it's all about observation and it's all about trusting your ability to observe… You are mentally trained to just go that next level and that next level. You know, it carries with you because then when you start reading papers and you start thinking about things…

Dan wasn't just trained "mentally." Having articulated a habitus, being mid-embodiment and searching for new embodiments, he gets entrained on phenomena that have the capacity to excite his sensorium. In the process, scientists in training start to get interested and involved, they start reading the literature and working through concepts. They are lured to follow phenomena, to "go that next level and that next level."

In the next section we examine how scientists *get interested* in phenomena they have yet to figure out how to observe or interpret. What we find is that when an experimentalist's interest is piqued, this is expressed as an excitation that propagates through their bodies and stories. These are the moments when they alight on phenomena that resonate with their habitus. We explore how their interest forms and how, in the

process, experimentalists get caught up with and inside of the phenomena they study. As they learn how to see and feel their way through their data, whether in the form of time-lapse film loops or 3D immersive environments, we watch them strain to articulate their hypotheses in the form of stories. We show that these stories are inflected by a kind of creativity that sweeps up their bodies and imaginations in the invention of and experimentation with new metaphors. We call this affectively and kinesthetically engaged practice kind of haptic creativity.

## Seeing, Scaling, and Story-making: Haptic Creativity in Responsive Media

Lit up in brilliant color with fluorescent genetic marker systems, live-cell imaging tracks the movements and transformations of organelles and proteins within cells, keeping pace with the flux of cellular and intracellular activities (Keller 2002; Myers 2005). As Hannah Landecker (1999) documents, "cellular 'behavior' " became "an object of study that was unthinkable in static modes of representation" (143) and "cells and tissues became entities to be thought about as having time, or occurring over time" (145). For some, the cinematographic camera acted like "a time machine, with forward and reverse gears, capable of expanding or compressing time scales at will" (Robert Watson-Watt quoted in Landecker 1999: 144). As Landecker demonstrates, "the particular nature of this trace – the film – and its amenability to acceleration or retardation, produced phenomena that it had not been possible to see before the use of microcinematography" (143). Contemporary techniques for live cell imaging operate with the same logic but ramp up the responsivity of this medium through computer intensive visualization. In the hands of live-cell microscopists, cellular time is rendered elastic, and users can engage kinesthetically and affectively in telling new kinds of cellular stories.

But, seeing in time generates significant interpretive challenges. The "molecular practices of cells" are anything but self-evident (see Myers n.d.). What are the challenges that come with interpreting the rhythms, flows, and processes of cellular life? How does a generation of scientists trained to interpret static images orient themselves inside of moving cells and incorporate the flow of time in their analysis? In an interview with Dan, Natasha asks: "If you're not trained to do it, seeing in time might present some difficulties in terms of being able to interpret what's going on in a cell. Have you experienced any moments where in introducing time you lose your bearings in the image?" Dan responds:

> I think in the current sciences some of the hardest processes to follow in time are these movements of little vesicles where there are just a lot of things moving at the same time. And as a result your eye doesn't know what to focus on. Well, in actual fact, the important point is not the movement of any one particular vesicle, or object, it's what the collective movement of the objects are.

No matter how much researchers slow down or speed up the rate of video playback, no matter how many times they loop a video clip, the blur of movement within a cell is hard to parse. Learning how to see in time is no small feat. It takes, as we described

earlier, a newly articulate body, an excitable habitus (in process), one sensitized to time-based phenomena.

There is an intriguing play here between the virtual and the actual in Dan's live cell images. In one sense, it is challenging for novices to distinguish what is happening in time-lapse footage of cellular activity. And yet, once the phenomena are articulated and storied through time, these images can seem to impart too much life. In other words, an excited habitus sees not just motion but also intention and personification in cellular processes. Early biologists using film recognized the double-edged sword of moving images. Moving images shocked them into new ways of seeing after decades of rendering living tissues into one-dimensional data sets, flattened, frozen, and arrayed it into graphs. While moving images are a corrective to static habits of mind and body, they also risk setting the experimentalist in motion. Live-cell imagers are always on the verge of falling for a moving story (Kelty and Landecker, 2004). And here we use the phrase "moving story" quite literally. Words put our perceptions and emotions into motion. Working in responsive, temporally elastic media, researchers don't just intra-act with the cells, they *intra-animate*, and so produce affectively charged stories of cellular life.

Similarly for CAVES researchers, the shock of swimming in a 3D environment is the *liveness* – the tangibility and multidimensionality – of the structures that had been so reduced in previous publications. They too are working with data whose scales and spaces and temporal dimensions are not easy to parse. They are faced with a slew of shifting questions: Where to look? How to look? What to look at? What counts as an interesting phenomenon? What might be an artifact?

One peculiar phrase gets repeated over and over by those working in the CAVES and watching time-lapse footage. It goes like this: "I'm looking for something interesting." This "looking" is an example of the middle voice. Normally, the things we are interested in finding are already known ahead of time, before we go out looking. But here the subject of the sentence works to "locate" or "discover" something they don't already know about, something worth further exploration. This thing will be one that piques the scientist's interest, and in fact, changes what is interesting for them. As one researcher put it: "I'm still at the stage where I'm deciding where I'm looking at what thing." There's a marvelous disorientation in the syntax of this statement. For us, this dizziness demonstrates the openness of inquiry in the CAVES.

In the CAVES, slicing through the data-space is exciting, a form of *extasis*, that is, the experience of being carried away or fully caught up in the experience. As the data they have been manipulating for years on flat screens comes alive for the first time in their hands, these scientists cannot suppress their excitement. The oft-repeated phrase, "I've been staring at this data for years on my computer screen but [now I] finally see it," points to the power of this environment to generate new insight. This excitability erupts through their bodies in expressions of like "Cool!" and "Wow!"

Marilyn Strathern (1991) has shown how scaling is culturally patterned activity. As we watch these scaling experiments, we recognize that the ways users manipulate their data and the possibilities that these technologies afford are part of a learned repertoire, and do not escape cultural limitations. But we do hypothesize that the degrees of freedom that the CAVES afford for scaling and rescaling are what makes this experimental system such a creative space for improvisation. This system gives researchers the ability to select, slice, color, enlarge and shrink, and rotate objects in "real time,"

that is, at the pace of lived perception. This gives them a context in which they can creatively conjure time-based and embodied analogies and metaphors.

This embodied dexterity manipulating scale and story is what we call haptic creativity. For example, Dan's shadow puppet dance with the rock-climbing bacteria illustrates how scaling becomes a potent mechanism for conjuring new analogies and experimenting with metaphoric connections to tell new stories. Like other experimenters, Dan does not know ahead of time what he is looking for, but he's on the lookout for something interesting. Dan has already shown us that the acts of looking and staring are not passive activities but active forms of embodied learning. In Merleau-Ponty's terms, Dan's insight is consistent with a "changed structure of consciousness" that comes in the wake of the "truly creative act [of reflecting] upon an unreflective experience" (Merleau-Ponty cited in Kozel 2007: 210). As he learned early on from his mentor, cultivating the dexterity to see and know takes time and creativity.

Dan spoke to this issue of learning how to see in time during a lecture he gave in Joe's undergraduate STS course on scientific visualization. He used the same looping video of the macrophage in the class as he did in his presentation at the NSF workshop we described earlier. In that first version he used the looping video to tell the story about the cell as a rock climber; but in this version, the cell acquires a new dexterity, in the form of little "sticky feet":

> When a cell moves parts of the cell move forward. In order to move the cell has to adhere to something. We can infer some of the forces… The only way we can see it is by imaging.
>
> Our lab is interested in the beginning steps when the membranes are pushed forward. And so you can think of these membranes as little sticky feet. If we just look at one area, we can see the membrane moving forward. But notice these dots. The more you look at these pictures, the more detail you see. The longer you stare at it the more you see. There are a lot of dots. As you stare at it longer and longer lots of details appear. These dots are phase-dense, which means that they contain lots of proteins. These are the little sticky feet that pull the cell forward. So, here we see part of the structure important for when cells move.

The rock-climbing cell performed by Dan in the NSF workshop is rearticulated in this presentation at a new level of molecular resolution. The cell acquires little sticky feet in the form of aggregations of proteins. Rescaling his seeing, he is able to tell a new kind of story.

He extends his participation with his data and instruments and so changes the experimental system. These extended processes of scaling and rescaling, orienting and reorienting allow him to be open to perceiving new phenomena. Dan stays with the cells long enough to learn how to see: "As you stare at it longer and longer lots of details appear." But for the scientist, it is not only their memory but also their imagination that is touched, and excited. Hovering in a space of not knowing, mid-embodiment, his interest gets piqued. This is the space in which improvisation and creativity flourish. This is what Kozel would call a space that encourages responsivity, where the time of engagement is not minimized. It is in his dance with the data that Dan contributes to the materialization of the phenomenon through a metaphor, which in this example manifests as dots and little sticky feet.

Metaphors, as George Lakoff (1993) describes them, consist of ontological correspondences or mappings between one domain and another (e.g., Love-AS-Journey, Time-AS-Money). These mappings are usually seen as cultural or language-level templates. Dan agrees with this formulation and recognizes both his own limited starting point and the limits of visualization software to make better connections:

> But what the image tells us about function relies on our ability to relate to other images and other information. The informatics package that allows us to go from image to function is very poorly developed. We don't have very good ways of representing them; that is, visualizing structures and extracting information from structures so that we can query other databases.

Dan speeds up the motion of the cell using time-lapse imaging and computer power, and magnifies it to the size of his body. While his ability to extract information is limited, we recognize in his practice a flexibility with regard to mapping-potential. By manipulating the spatial and temporal scales of the phenomena, Dan creates new possibilities for associating these images with biological functions in a way that bridges distinct domains of data. In particular, when he scales the video to his own size and speed, he makes available a learned repertoire of movements, gestures, and meanings (his habitus corpus) that help him make new connections and "practical metaphors".

The KeckCAVES allows its users to play with scaling itself. As noted in one of their grant proposals, the design principle from the beginning has been to "bring complex phenomena within human spatial and temporal perceptual and cognitive ranges." As users reach into the data, they reshape it: enlarging and shrinking, selecting and rotating. The scientists Joe watched were conforming their bodies to the data and vice-versa.

From field notes:

> A new dataset collected by a professor and grad student. From Baja Cal Mexico where there was a recent 7.2 earthquake, they immediately got down there with laser tools (LIDAR) to measure the large earth displacements. Today we looked at the first of four datasets. The immediate reaction was COOOL!!! "Seeing" the dramatic earth displacement and length and sub cracks thrilled everyone. 10 people watching while one "drove" the visualization, taking turns doing the driving, trading glasses around.
>
> After the initial excitement, three researchers and the programmer stayed for a couple of hours, working with the data, thinking through the process. One spent a lot of time playing with the data and tools, exploring the geography in different ways, drawing things on it, rotating and looking, pondering, redrawing, tilting; trying both to make sense of the displacement and to discover new aspects of it.

For the scientists playing in the experimental system, this is an intriguing form of engagement. A story emerges out of possible stories, with named actors and actions. One of the stories solidifies through a positive feed-forward cycle in which the narrative recursively affects how the scientists see. Seeing and story intra-act; each builds on and deepens the other through an escalating process of testing and validation. In the process, the scientist's attention becomes relatively fixed. In the process they make a remarkable shift out of the open space of improvisation, into a space in which they

now know what to look at and what to look for, and therefore they have acquired the grounds to argue for particular ways of seeing.

Field notes:

> Much of the time was first spent determining what was interesting (they didn't know what, but they knew *that* something was worth discovering): the shape of the displacement; a long plane, then jagged then plane again (almost parallel). For each possibility that occurred, they had to figure out how to define and measure it, and here they discovered that the tools were limited – because the data tools were designed for other purposes. The use limitations were a function of the original intent design for the tools that now didn't make sense.

The visualization programs depend on database structures that enable some forms of responsive manipulation and constrain others. A conversation between the geologists and the programmer reveals that the data and the program are limited because they embody other theories (they are "theory-laden"), based on previous histories of uses and projects. Nonetheless, the scaling freedom of the system inspires thoughts about what *should* be possible. Theories and data structures intra-act with haptic desires for new access to objects and knowledge. The programmer in this situation suggests that the data could be restructured, but all agree that this would break the real-time interaction with the visualization, and would be an unacceptable compromise. The group reaches an agreement to develop a new interface to enable the desired manipulation. In this way new forms of freedom are retrofit into the system.

The seemingly redundant phrases: "This is a story," "I am looking for something interesting," call attention first to the obvious ongoing construction of knowledge. They enact the speaker as a "storytelling scientist" in search of an object, and the visualization – the time-lapse video or the CAVES projection – is enacted as the "apparatus" or "instrument" for producing an object. There is as yet no object, only the potential for one. To put this process another way, during the fascinated time of play while an experimentalist is looking for something interesting, the status of the data itself is unknown. There is no clear cut that would clean up "raw data" and distribute "noise." In the CAVES and live-cell imaging, there is no "raw data" to be cooked, that is, until a metaphoric story contracts the free play and resolves the encounter in the form of a sensible and satisfying story. Indeed, it is a constant challenge for these researchers to pause their excited play long enough to craft a convincing story for their peers. Our future research concerns the problems they encounter "rendering proof" within their communities of scientific practice and peer review.

## CONCLUSIONS

> *"Movement, not pondering, brings new knowledge."*
>
> (Irmgard Bartenieff, 1980)

A number of collaborative insights emerge from our fieldwork. One is that responsive media increase the degrees of freedom for researchers to scale and rescale data in real time. This is not just a practice of placing objects in direct relation to human durations

and dimensions; it is one that allows researchers to transform their bodily capacities and refigure what they can see, say, feel, and know. For the researcher this process is experienced kinesthetically and affectively, as well as visually; and they are drawn into movements and into forms of expression they may not have known in advance. Tracking the excitations that move through their bodies we discovered a form of "haptic creativity" immanent to experimental forms of life. We also observed the transduction of new metaphors and analogies across changing media and changing bodies: a macrophage moving on a slide is digitally rendered into time-lapse video that loops on a giant screen; mid-embodiment, Dan's hand performs a shadow dance on the screen as he conducts body-experiments to feel through cellular movement. This is a practice that could be called participatory remediation. We suggest that responsive media can excite this kind of radical experimentation with metaphors and kinesthetic stories.

These practitioners experience a tension between the haptic creativity they experience working with responsive media and conventional data forms. It is in the space generated by this tension that our collaborators' reflexivity becomes palpable; they bring a deepened attention to their own cultural practices. These include the practices that Fleck (1979) outlined in the 1930s – thought collectives, thought styles, publication limitations, journal forms, promotion requirements – as well as trans-career concerns.

In studying the twinned processes of experience and experiment we hope to lay a partial bridge between different traditions in the anthropology of science; that is, between research programs that follow the transformations of objects from "nature" to lab to text, and cultural phenomenologies that focus on lived experience as a process prior to objectification. Drawing on phenomenologists, dancers, performance artists, and feminist theorists, we address the problem of the lived experience of objectification itself, of a scientist mid-experiment. The free play of haptic and metaphoric creativity that we have described here is always in tension with the scientists' own thought styles, and the proper forms of scientific expression in a given community. Their dancing metaphors and stories were experienced both as generating new agential cuts into the data – redefining bodies, objects and instruments – and as recalcitrant forms that limited the effective propagation of objective results. Researchers mid-experiment, could not suppress the creativity and excitement coursing through their tissues, and were simultaneously compelled to embody their insights in quantifiable signs. What we've shown here is that this capacity for oscillation between embodiments seems to be their mode of embodiment. Elsewhere we will document how this gives them a habitus simultaneously for objectification, for the lived experience of insight and reduction, and for the agential cuttings that allow them to render proofs.

We too, as anthropologists, have been drawn into these experimental systems, and we too wish we could have our readers experience the haptic immersion in the CAVES and the lively dancing with macrophages on the big screen. Until that time of a regime change in embodied media, we remain part of these experiments, working with and within research groups, resolutely mid-embodiment, at that place where our research problems and those of the scientists meet.[2]

## NOTES

1 Our current project not only engages scientists, engineers, and technologists, but also the artists, dancers, Laban movement analysts, filmmakers, doctors, hackers and teachers who

are actively experimenting reflexively with responsive media. Joe brings to these conversations his own expertise as a programmer and body-worker, and Natasha brings her expertise as a dancer and biologist.

2 We would like to thank Melissa Atkinson-Graham, Jessica Caporusso, James Griesemer, Orit Halpern and Colin Milburn for their close reading and insightful comments on earlier versions of this essay.

## REFERENCES

Adrian, Barbara, 2008 Actor Training the Laban Way: An Integrated Approach to Voice, Speech, and Movement. New York: Allworth Press.

Amman, K., and K. Knorr Cetina, 1990 The Fixation of (Visual) Evidence. *In* Representation in Scientific Practice. M. Lynch and S. Woolgar, eds. pp. 85–122. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Barad, Karen, 1996 Meeting the Universe Halfway: Realism and Social Constructivism without Contradiction. *In* Feminism, Science, and Philosophy of Science. L.H. Nelson and J. Nelson, eds. pp.161–194. Boston: Kluwer.

Barad, Karen, 2003 Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter. Signs 28(3): 801–831.

Barad, Karen, 2007 Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Bartenieff, Irmgard and Dori Lewis, 1980 Body Movement: Coping with the Environment. New York: Gordon and Breach Science Pub.

Benveniste, Emile, 1971 Active and Middle Voice in the Verb. *In* Problems in General Linguistics. pp. 145–151. Coral Gables: University of Miami Press.

Bergson, Henri, 1991 Matter and Memory. New York: Zone Books.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1969 Intellectual Field and Creative Project. Social Science Information 8(2): 89–119.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1984 Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Callon, Michel, 1986 Some Elements of a Sociology of Translation: Domestication of the Scallops and the Fishermen of St. Brieuc Bay. *In* Power, Action and Belief: A New Sociology of Knowledge? J. Law, ed. pp. 196–229. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Cline, George J., 1983 The Middle Voice in the New Testament, Th. M. Dissertation, Grace Theological Seminary.

Csordas, Thomas J., 1994 Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Deleuze, Gilles, 1988 Spinoza, Practical Philosophy. San Francisco: City Lights Books.

Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari, 1987 A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Dumit, Joseph, 2004 Picturing Personhood: Brain Scans and Biomedical Identity. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Fischer, Michael M. J., 2003 Emergent Forms of Life and the Anthropological Voice. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Fleck, Ludwik, 1979 Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Fortun, Mike, 2005 For an Ethics of Promising, Or: A Few Kind Words About James Watson. New Genetics and Society 24(2): 157–174.

Haraway, Donna J., 1991 Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature. New York: Routledge.

Haraway, Donna J., 1997 Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. Femaleman_Meets_ Oncomouse: Feminism and Technoscience. New York: Routledge.

Helmreich, Stefan, 2008 Alien Ocean: Anthropological Voyages in Microbial Seas. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Herzig, Rebecca, 2004 On Performance, Productivity, and Vocabularies of Motive in Recent Studies of Science. Feminist Theory 5(2): 127–147.

Hilgartner, Stephen, 2002 Science on Stage: Expert Advice as Public Drama. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Johnson, Ericka, 2007 Surgical Simulators and Simulated Surgeons: Reconstituting Medical Practice and Practitioners in Simulations. Social Studies of Science 37: 585–608.

Keller, Evelyn Fox, 2002 Making Sense of Life: Explaining Biological Development with Models, Metaphors, and Machines. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Kelty, Christopher, and Hannah Landecker, 2004 A Theory of Animation: Cells, L-Systems, and Film. Grey Room 1(17): 30–63.

Klaiman, M. H., 1991 Grammatical Voice. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kozel, Susan, 2007 Closer: Performance, Technologies, Phenomenology. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Lakoff, George, 1993 The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor. Metaphor and Thought 2: 202–251.

Landecker, Hannah L., 1999 Technologies of Living Substance: Tissue Culture and Cellular Life in Twentieth Century Biomedicine. Ph.D. Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Latour, Bruno, 2004 How to Talk About the Body? The Normative Dimensions of Science Studies. Body and Society 10(2–3): 205–229.

Latour, Bruno, 2005 Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor–Network-Theory. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lizardo, Omar, 2004 The Cognitive Origins of Bourdieu's Habitus. Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour 34(4): 375–401.

Lynch, Michael, 1988 The Externalized Retina: Selection and Mathematization in the Visual Documentation of Objects in the Life Sciences. Human Studies 11(2): 201–234.

Lynch, Michael, and Steve Woolgar, 1990 Representation in Scientific Practice. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Mauss, Marcel, 1935 Techniques of the Body. Economy and Society 2(1): 70–88.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 1962 Phenomenology of Perception. New York: Humanities Press.

Mol, Annemarie, 2002 The Body Multiple: Ontology in Medical Practice. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Myers, Natasha, 2005 Visions for Embodiment in Technoscience. *In* Teaching as Activism: Equity Meets Environmentalism. P. Tripp and L. Muzzin, eds. pp. 255–267. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Myers, Natasha, 2006 Animating Mechanism: Animation and the Propagation of Affect in the Lively Arts of Protein Modeling. *In* The Future of Feminist Technoscience. Theme issue Science Studies 19(2): 6–30.

Myers, Natasha, 2007 Modeling Proteins, Making Scientists: An Ethnography of Pedagogy and Visual Cultures in Contemporary Structural Biology. Ph.D. Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Myers, Natasha, n.d. Molecular Embodiments: Modeling Proteins and Making Scientists in the Contemporary Biosciences.

Pickering, Andrew, 1993 The Mangle of Practice: Agency and Emergence in the Sociology of Science. American Journal of Sociology 99(3): 559–589.

Pickering, Andrew, 1995 The Mangle of Practice: Time, Agency, and Science. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Prentice, Rachel, 2005 The Anatomy of a Surgical Simulation: The Mutual Articulation of Bodies in and through the Machine. Social Studies of Science 35: 867–894.

Puig de la Bellacasa, Maria, n.d. Thinking with Care. *In* Thinking with Donna Haraway. S. Ghamari-Tabrizi, ed. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Rajchman, John, 2002 Introduction. *In* Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life. Gilles Deleuze. New York: Zone Books.

Rheinberger, Hans-Jörg, 1997 Toward a History of Epistemic Things: Synthesizing Proteins in the Test Tube. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Rheinberger, Hans-Jörg, 2010 On Historicizing Epistemology: An Essay. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Saeed, John I., 2003 Semantics. Oxford: Blackwell.

Sandoval, Chela, 2000 Methodology of the Oppressed. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, and Margaret Lock, 1987 The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work in Medical Anthropology. Medical Anthropology Quarterly, New Series 1(1): 6–41.

Shapin, Steven, 1994 A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Shapin, Steven, and Simon Schaffer, 1985 Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Strathern, Marilyn, 1991 Partial Connections. Sabage, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

Suchman, Lucy, 2007 Human–Machine Reconfigurations: Plans and Situated Actions, 2nd Expanded Edition. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sumner, Dawn, 2007 Fun with Isosurfaces and Volumes, Youtube – http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PlKCiSCK55s, accessed 12 November 2010

Thompson, Charis, 2005 Making Parents: The Ontological Choreography of Reproductive Technologies. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Turkle, Sherry, with additional essays by William Clancey, Yanni Loukissas, Stefan Helmreich and Natasha Myers, 2009 Simulation and Its Discontents. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Turkle, Sherry, Joseph Dumit, Hugh Gusterson, David Mindell, Susan Silbey, Yanni Loukissas and Natasha Myers, 2005 Information Technologies and Professional Identity: A Comparative Study of the Effects of Virtuality: Report to the National Science Foundation, Grant No. 0220347.

Waldby, Cathy, 2000 The Visible Human Project: Informatic Bodies and Posthuman Medicine. New York: Routledge.

Wei, Sha Xin, 2002 Resistance Is Fertile: Gesture and Agency in the Field of Responsive Media. Configurations 10(3): 439–472.

White, Hayden, 1992 Writing in the Middle Voice. Stanford Literature Review 9: 179–187.

CHAPTER 14

# HYBRIDITY
## *Hybrid Bodies of the Scientific Imaginary*

*Lesley Sharp*

In the wake of Paul Rabinow's now often cited essay "Artificiality and Enlightenment" (Rabinow 1992), those working at the intersection of anthropology and science studies have revitalized scholarly interest in categories of relatedness, offering compelling works intent on deciphering the moral parameters of embodied hybridity. Human bodies are now regularly reformed by the presumed promises of interspeciality (Haraway 1992). Such efforts help insure that the human form may no longer stand apart as discrete and clearly bounded, but, rather, as simultaneously flexible, permeable (Martin 1994), and capable of sharing biological substance with other individuals or creatures. These sorts of blended bodies inspire newly configured forms of intimacy. This trend is especially pronounced in contexts circumscribed by reproductive technologies, molecular science, genomics, genetics, transplant medicine, and soon, I predict, nanoscience and robotic surgery. Interrogations of embodied, intimate encounters with hybridity now abound, for instance, where gestational surrogacy (Ragoné 1996, 1999), egg donation (Edwards et al. 1993; Strathern 1992), transgenic animals (Franklin 2003, 2007; Haraway 1997; Taussig 2004), blood, tissue, and organ transfers (Copeman 2005; Lock 2002; Sharp 2006), and prostheses and other mechanical devices (Downey, et al. 1997; Gray 1995; Messinger 2009) occur.

Hybrid renderings of bodies are inherently moral projects, as is evident on several fronts. For one, hybridity raises thorny bioethical questions about scientific tampering and the associated insecure nature of the body's boundaries. This remaking of bodies by science engenders significant consequences for sociality and subjectivity, inevitably "surfacing" (Taylor 2005) particular meanings otherwise concealed by a scientific longing to transform, alter, shift, or enhance bodies formerly imagined as distinct, stable, and predictable. When framed as such, one encounters a richly embellished

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

scientific ethos, a domain rife with contradictory values associated with efforts to enhance humans by merging them with other life forms. Deliberate efforts to generate hybrids, then, are simultaneously moral and imaginative projects.

Of particular concern to me is how hybridity insists on reconfigured meanings and values, and how these affect, on the one hand, public perceptions of bodies remade by science and, on the other, the scientific logic that drives and, more importantly, legitimates experimental efforts to merge disparate forms. Anthropologists – and, especially, ethnographers – have proved adept at probing lay responses, where biosociality offers an effective framework that easily incorporates radical body transformations. Biosociality is likewise read as a contemporary reworking of kinship in contexts shaped by clinical medicine and experimental laboratory science, especially when the integrity of established configurations of subjectivity and sociality are under threat of collapse.

This common reframing of biosociality-as-kinship is inspired in large part by David Schneider's now often quoted pronouncement from half a century ago that "If science discovers new facts about biogenetic relationship, then this is what [American] kinship is and was all along, although it may not have been known at the time" (Schneider 1980 (1965): 23–24). Today, a wide swath of authors interrogates how users, consumers, laity, or the afflicted imagine hybridity and associated technologies as social processes evident, for instance, in the effects of visual technologies on fetal subjectivity (Georges 1996; Mitchell and Georges 1997; Morgan 1999, 2009; Taylor 2008); emergent kin obligations associated with the "gifting" and presumed reciprocity associated with organ and other tissue transfers (Fox and Swazey 1992; Sharp 2001); newly configured communities among those who share unusual genetic traits or disorders (Rapp 2000; Rapp et al. 2001); the manner in which the public pushes back against transgenics and cloning (Franklin 2007; Haraway 2003a), genomics (Pálsson and Hardardóttir 2002), and gene prospecting (Hayden 2003) in efforts to guard species integrity; and even in the biological, social, and political complexities inherent in expanding definitions of "life itself" (Helmreich 2009; Rose 2001).

However intriguing, when hybridity flags biosociality, this analytical strategy nevertheless risks generating imprecise readings of values and meanings. Biosociality is commonly evoked to demonstrate only rough approximations of "kinship," commonly glossed as a generalized statement about newly imagined configurations of sameness and difference. Absent are references to the more intricate workings – and conflicts – that older kinship studies provided. In this light, I argue that anthropology could profit from a reopening of kinship and its associated categories of analysis as a compelling methodological tool (Franklin and McKinnon 2001: 7–11), an approach that could potentially enrich readings of highly experimental and anticipatory science as moral projects, especially within those domains that evince emergent, hybrid forms.

When set alongside the contemporary category of biosociality, reinvigorated understandings of kinship may in fact offer a far more complex – albeit woefully underutilized – means to probe what Beidelman (1993) once referenced as the "moral imagination," a framework interpreted more recently by Livingston as encompassing efforts to respond creatively (and, even, strategically) to unusual, stigmatized, or debilitated bodies where no clear resolution is in sight (Livingston 2005). A central idea at work here is that social responses to the strange or uncanny (Douglas 1966; Kristeva 1982)

are inescapably complex and problematic affairs that foreground the dilemmas and enigmatic character of everyday life. As moral projects, then, imaginative efforts are less about distinguishing right from wrong, or recognizing clear solutions, as they are about emergent struggles during moments of uncertainty. Whereas Beidelman's and Livingston's respective labors are set within small and mid-range African communities, I argue that a similar problematic pervades scientific action and thought during efforts to transform human bodies into hybrids. Whereas formalized, bioethical codes might clearly dictate the proper treatment of human and animal subjects, still other dilemmas surface when humans and / or particular animal species generate complicated and ambiguous meanings that inescapably reference sociality and subjectivity. It is at these very moments when scientists themselves – and not simply the lay public – may activate the logic of kinship.

One way to approach this, then, is to ask, how are meanings reinscribed onto bodies after they have been removed from their social contexts, altered by science, and then reintroduced within specific social milieux? Or, phrased yet another way, how are bodies that are subjected to scientific reasoning then reenculturated by scientists themselves? Rather than merely asking what sorts of social responses do certain bodies engender, I wish to consider the ways in which science (or, more appropriately, involved scientists) think about the making of hybrids. Thus, what are the sociomoral parameters of the "scientific imagination" (DelVecchio Good 2001, 2007) in highly experimental contexts, and why should sociality and subjectivity matter at all?

## The Moral Parameters of Embodied Hybridity

Currently, biosociality most frequently glosses newly configured ways to think about how science provokes (and, even, empowers) emergent understandings of similarity, belonging, and selfhood among previously unrelated persons in contexts involving shared, embodied substance (be it transfused blood, genetic markers, or implanted organs or tissues). What, though, of more intricate and intimate categories of relatedness and difference within the very science that enables such imaginings? As an established – albeit now woefully neglected – anthropological literature attests, kinship proffers potent analytical tools for deciphering the sociomoral consequences of sameness and self, foreignness and difference, and security and danger, all of which – as we shall see – prove relevant to the scientific making of human / animal hybrids as a legitimate enterprise.

Kinship has long been understood by anthropologists as an inherently moral and temporal project: as Maurice Bloch once asserted, the moral "character" of kinship unfolds over the "long and the short term." Kinship is simultaneously about sameness, reliability, trust, and, ultimately, morality, where those who fail in the end to fulfill kinship obligations stand outside that moral order. Furthermore, whereas kin should treat one another as equals, disparities surface at those very moments where ambiguities about strangers or nonself are manifest. When we approach kinship as a simultaneously social and moral project, we encounter a dialectic involving idioms or categories of relatedness and an ethos that perseveres, in Bloch's words, "through the vicissitudes of time" (Bloch 1973). Marriage, for instance, transforms outsiders into

insiders; lines of descent may convert enemies into allies; and shared origins can foster cooperation over competition. Kinship reconfigures sociality and subjectivity by transforming "strange" into "same" within particular sociomoral worlds. Finally, whereas kinship is most certainly about relationality, it is also about sentimental structures (Wilson 1971), the latter all too frequently overlooked in those instances where biosociality is invoked (Sharp 2006: 193).

I offer xenotransplantation as a field within which to probe the limitations of biosociality by drawing upon kinship idioms in contexts that specifically involve the creation of human / animal hybrids. Perhaps no other field of science exemplifies hybridity more profoundly than xenotransplantation (henceforth *xeno*), a highly experimental realm driven by the determination to overcome significant immunological hurdles so that the failed organs of human patients might be replaced with those derived from various animal species. Although xeno is certainly driven by inquisitiveness, daringness (and, as some would have it, hubris) that together typify potentially any branch of experimental science, xeno researchers most frequently describe their efforts as spurred on by a health crisis of grave significance in the United States and, increasingly, abroad: more specifically, transplant medicine is plagued by a scarcity in donated human organs and tissues, and the gap between demand and supply increases annually as more patients join waiting lists for hearts, livers, kidneys, and other transplantable parts. Against this backdrop, xeno is framed as an inherently moral project. Involved scientists are determined to alleviate human suffering by overcoming immunological hurdles that impede the successful implantation of xenografts within dying patients. Thus, the answer to human organ scarcity lies with a reliable, alternative market and, potentially, unlimited supply of parts derived from expendable "donor" animals.

Of particular interest to me are the specific categories of animals deemed the most appropriate candidates for such hybrid meldings. Throughout much of the 20th century, scientific desire has focused intently on a range of simian species (most notably chimpanzees, baboons, and macaques); within the last two decades or so, however, nonhuman primates have been sidelined in response to a very recent shift in preference for developing porcine xenografts. These various embodied human / simian and human / swine pairings, when staged as moral projects, are regularly framed – and, thus, legitimated or naturalized – by drawing on idioms of kinship.

As I shall illustrate throughout the remainder of this essay, within xeno research, primates and pigs share a joint position as compatible, albeit unusual, companion species (Haraway 2003b) to humans and, as such, they stand neatly alongside us within the imposing framework of biosociality. In this broad sense, the trope of "compatibility" – at times imagined as immunological, at others, social – pervades xeno scientists' discourse on interspecies hybridity. Closer inspection reveals, however, that scientific desire reads compatibility differently vis-à-vis these two categories of animals, such that primates begin to resemble consanguinal or blood relatives, whereas pigs are more akin, so to speak, to distant albeit promising future affines. Furthermore, when, by the late 20th century, scientific desire within xeno science shifted its focus from primates to pigs, hybrid pairings of humans with apes and monkeys were reconfigured as inappropriate and even incestuous unions, paving the way for a new sort of "match" – or simultaneously immunological and social marriage – with swine.

Xeno experts thus (re)frame hybrid experimentation as a legitimate and inherently moral project by invoking the sentimental qualities of kinship. This process, however, is contingent on several epistemological shifts that reference biocapital, monsters, and embodied intimacy. First, xeno's success (or peril) is driven unquestionably by the marketplace; nevertheless, the moral imperative to alleviate human suffering squelches discussions of experimental animals as rarified sources of futuristic biocapital. Second, whereas hybrid bodies are viewed as inherently unnatural within general social contexts, their potentially monstrous qualities are resocialized by involved researchers as sites of intensified scientific desire. Third, as xeno scientists struggle tirelessly to overcome the instability of hybrid meldings, immunological "compatibility" informs ways in which to reimagine "donor" primates and, most recently, pigs as bearing the promises of newfound interspecies kith and kin.

## Hybrids and the Morality of Biocapital

Within the United States, all experimental science is potentially – or, even, inevitably – market driven: whether based within the academy, industry, or the military (three domains that often overlap), all research scientists must rely on outside funding to advance their work. Federal funding, private funds, named and anonymous endowments, and venture capital: these sorts of fiscal initiatives drive American science generally and xeno research more specifically. The ability to woo and maintain one's hold on funding is especially precarious where highly experimental work is concerned. Finance is a fickle force in science, and investors who demand short-term and clear-cut results can easily stifle creativity or even insure failure if they lack the patience required to await decades of trial and error before convincing results can emerge (Latour 1987). The scientific desire to capitalize on hybrid possibilities most certainly drives scientists' efforts. As such, human / primate and human / porcine bodies are tentatively imagined as lucrative sources of biocapital (Franklin and Lock 2003; cf. Sunder Rajan 2006).

Nevertheless, when involved scientists imagine xeno's marketability, such sentiments clash with other values that foreground xeno as a moral project intent on alleviating organ scarcity and thereby assuaging human suffering. In essence, the moral economy of anticipatory research obscures any desire for profit. Within this sociomoral framework, the scientific desire to capitalize on hybrid bodies is thus exceptionally muted, a trend that becomes all too clear when xeno is compared to competing realms similarly intent on generating alternatives to human organs. Bioengineers, for example, work tirelessly to invent "artificial" organs: these are mechanical devices designed to replace or augment failing hearts, lungs, livers, pancreases, and kidneys (Sharp 2009). But whereas engineers openly court military and venture capital – holding workshops at their respective professional conferences on how best to shift from the academy to industry, incorporate spin-off and for-profit firms, acquire patents for their devices, and thwart their competitors – xeno experts remain aware of and highly sensitive to the precariousness of public support (and they are especially alert to the dangers of animal activists' vehement opposition). Within the laboratory, "compatibility" is read by xeno experts as simultaneously an immunological and social challenge.

## Monstrous Bodies and Interspecies Compatibility

Xeno experts understand their efforts as a contemporary manifestation of a deeply historicized and innate human desire to merge disparate bodies. Mythological creatures – including the Sphinx, centaurs, the Minotaur, and a range of deities from various times and cultures – signal our species' natural propensity to meld humans and animals within single bodies. They argue that evidence abounds, too, that ancient healers and, subsequently, modern physicians have long attempted to suture animal parts to human bodies, such efforts traced to medieval and even earlier times, with an intensification of work emerging by the onset of the 20th century (Cooper 2007; Deschamps et al. 2005). Set against these selective cultural histories, xeno looms as a logical and creative force within the scientific imaginary.

An inescapable dilemma, however, is that whereas experimental xeno scientists themselves regard interspecies pairings as natural couplings, the quite literal suturing together of humans and animals is generally perceived by laity (and even more so by animal activists) as monstrous acts of mad science. After all, the power of mythological, hybrid creatures rests with their uncanny physicality, their often troubled histories, and the sometimes terrifying control they wield over the lives and destinies of mere mortals. Even relatively benign monsters are skilled tricksters; more virulent ones are predatory in nature, terrorizing or even devouring human beings. Those creatures who are of human design (of whom Frankenstein's monster looms as an important archetype, an image that xeno experts *never* invoke) signal the dangers that emerge when science oversteps important sociomoral boundaries. Although monsters may often seem to be part human, they are never embraced as our full-fledged kin. Instead, they stand out of bounds of human society, always understood as unsuitable (or, even, as incomprehensible) companions, partners, or mates.

Xeno experts are well aware of the social constraints imposed on monstrous pairings, and in response they make special efforts to obscure references to the threatening, harmful, or anti-social qualities of embodied hybridity. Nevertheless, xeno experts admire others' attempts within science to overcome interspeciality's troublesome qualities. At times, hybrids are celebrated as a unique and even tamed category of monster. For instance, xeno science is intent on fabricating *chimeras*. Although the original Chimera was a terrifying monster of ancient Greek mythology, immunologists apply this term today to creatures whose bodies successfully integrate disparate genetic material free from either chronic or life-threatening forms of rejection. The chimera, then, signals the scientific longing to alter the natural propensities of various species so as to generate new categories of medically valued hybrids reconceived, in essence, as tamed or naturalized monsters. If xeno science can indeed make this so, involved researchers might squelch social fears by promising new forms of healing, where radical configurations of embodied intimacy bridge a currently troubled species divide.

## The Intimacy of Interspeciality

Xeno research is by very definition an anticipatory branch of experimental science, thus marking especially fertile ground for exploring emergent categories of sociality and

subjectivity. Temporal framing is a pervasive strategy within xeno science, employed strategically as a way to think prophetically about scientific desire as a social process set within the marketplace (Guyer 2007; Sharp in press). Xeno experts, for instance, often foreground the open-ended quality of their ongoing research efforts. When asked when they think xeno transplants might become a medical reality, respondents generally offer such responses as "perhaps in a decade," or "not in my lifetime." Still others prefer to paraphrase Norman Shumway (1923–2006) (a surgeon who performed the first adult cardiac allotransplant in the U.S. in 1968) who was fond of saying that "xenografts are the future of transplantation … and always will be" (see, for instance Hunt 2006).

Xeno experts are, nevertheless, engaged in an ongoing quest to identify an ideal "donor" species whose body, organs, and immunological systems may well prove it to be a compatible match for humans. This notion of "compatibility" is pivotal to the workings of scientific desire and the moral imagination within xeno science. The values that facilitate the selection of a particular species as an ideal match are, unquestionably, complex, driven simultaneously by scientific knowledge of – and pronounced preference for – transforming various animals into our ideal, embodied companions.

Primates and pigs each have their own particular cultural histories that render them simultaneously adaptable to human use and morally compatible mates for us in science (Bartkowski 2008; Franklin 2007; Haraway 1989; Papagaroufali 1996). By mid 20th century, chimpanzees stood out clearly as the animal of choice during a range of experimental attempts at xenografting, second only to baboons (who, by the 1980s, had displaced chimps when the latter proved too rare, expensive, and difficult to breed and maintain in captivity). Throughout the twentieth century, these and other simian species figured prominently in still other domains of American science, including aeronautics and space exploration, experimental psychology, primatology, and biomedical research. Their appropriateness as research subjects has always been framed in terms of their evolutionary and, even, social proximity to us. As close cousins related to us by our sharing of primordial ancestors, chimpanzees, baboons, macaques, and other primates made a relatively effortless transition to being the animals most desired by xeno researchers, who have long imagined them as bearing the promises of compatibility and, thus, embodied intimacy. If immunological rejection could indeed be overcome, simians would ultimately master the shift from being similar to us to being the same as us.

Unquestionably, xeno experts' imaginings of simian worth may be read through the filter of biosociality: by integrating disparate immunological systems within a single body, xeno science erases any relevant traces of incompatibility and difference. Here, though, biosociality proves most fruitful if equated with *biological* compatibility, where cells of disparate origins lace together to generate seamless tissue grafts within the ailing bodies of human patients.

Deeper meanings and values surface, however, if we shift the register to the more intricate (and intimate) analyses fostered by kinship studies. Attention to older categories of belonging foreground not simply the transfer of substance, but the sentimental structures associated with desired intimacy. This merging of shared substance within xeno is dependent on a very particular sort of narrative, one whose veracity hinges on the ability to spin convincing stories about evolutionary proximity, shared origins, and blood relatedness (Bartkowski 2008). When, in the recent past, xeno experts spoke of nonhuman primates, they regularly referenced apes and monkeys as the closest of cousins and, thus, the most desired of immunological mates.

(This language is eerily reminiscent of older musings in anthropology regarding widespread preference for parallel or cross-cousin marriages.) Xenografting thus emerged as a rather uncanny sort of arranged interspecies marriage between chimps, baboons, and macaques with human beings.

When read within the analytical framework of kinship, these seemingly scientific narratives read as morality tales about desired kin relations – and, perhaps, even, subsequent obligations – as they unfold over time. In temporal terms, primates as a broad category of stranger species have been viewed, first, as ideal mates, later as newfound kin, and, eventually, should xenografts prove successful, fully integrated as equivalents to or even as the same as self. In other words, xeno is not merely about shared substance, but about coterminous meanings and associated dilemmas activated by scientific desire. Within the rarified world of xeno research, species vulnerability, monstrous couplings, and precarious matches foreground the moral "character" of interspecies kinship as it unfolds over the "long and the short term" (again, see Bloch 1973). Just as marriage transforms human strangers into kin, xeno science bears the promise of converting cousin species immunologically and socially into "same" or "self." When viewed as such, chimps, baboons, and macaques indeed stand out as an extraordinary category of consanguinal or blood kin.

By the late 20th century, however, xeno experts' desires for primates had begun to wither, and eventually these creatures reemerged as potential pariahs in the face of several insurmountable hurdles. These included the AIDS pandemic in the wake of theories that the HIV virus could have originated in colonies of African primates; associated fears that still other pathogens could jump the species barrier; and several recent xenograft surgeries that proved fatal to human patients. In reference to the latter, the most notable cases involved the failed attempt to transplant a baboon heart in Baby Fae in 1984, and two subsequent surgeries conducted in the 1990s in Pittsburgh when baboon livers were implanted in two terminally ill adult male patients. Xeno experts subsequently abandoned all efforts to prepare primates as xenograft "donors" for ailing humans.

Currently, swine shoulder hybridity's promises, and this shift in species preference was accompanied by tales that foregrounded the power of the marketplace to reconfigure sociomoral understandings of interspecies grafting as a legitimate scientific pursuit. That is, when xeno experts abandoned primates in preference for pigs, they activated narratives of practicality and, thus, the marketplace, that featured both categories of animals as sources of biocapital. As xeno experts now regularly explain, pigs mature rapidly, and sows more particularly are prolific breeders, producing large litters with ease. Furthermore, the genetic makeup of pigs can be altered fairly easily, and they present fewer challenges where their care is concerned because regulatory apparatuses in the United States and elsewhere categorize them as farm rather than laboratory animals. In contrast, monkeys and even more so, chimps, generate significant problems in terms of their upkeep. They require many more years to mature; have lengthy gestational periods; produce only one or, at most, two offspring at a time; are temperamental and difficult when kept in isolation; and are very expensive to maintain in captivity. In turn, regulations require complex, long-term plans for their care and subsequent retirement should they survive experimental use.

The vagaries of biocapital thus (re)surface at those moments when xeno experts (re)imagine the promises of hybridity as embodied by competing animal species; once

a particular animal is in place (be it primate or pig), the register shifts yet again to foreground xeno as a sociomoral project intent on saving human lives. As this shift in register occurs, kinship idioms are (re)activated. Simian species, imagined in the past as our close cousins and, thus, ideal mates, have subsequently been rejected for a more suitable and prolific porcine partner. Xeno experts now speak of pigs as a superior match that stands against archaic understandings of primates.

I am often told today that pigs are so similar anatomically to humans as to be indistinguishable from us, and they conceivably could be bred so that their organs could be tailored for a near perfect immunological match and anatomical fit for individual patients. Some xeno scientists even elide anatomy with evolutionary proximity. (This is in fact is scientifically unfounded: as omnivores their evolution parallels ours because they have adapted to similar environments, but they are by no means close evolutionary cousins.) Among xeno experts these imagined notions of similarity and sameness are rooted in the human ability to manipulate pigs genetically and, thus, transform "difference" into "sameness" or a "foreign species" into "self." Because generations of pigs can be bred in fairly rapid succession, genetically altered pigs emerge as "evolutionarily close" to us because we can potentially manipulate genetic lines of succession, thus creating creatures tailored to scientific needs. It is no coincidence, too, that this longing is so squarely focused on the potential borne by special breed sows who are imagined simultaneously as producers of coveted products and as the transgenic mates scientists so intensely desire.

The grammar of kinship aids us in disentangling this emergent preference for pigs (and, it seems, sows): whereas primates, as true evolutionary cousins, are regarded as blood kin, pigs represent an altogether different sort of match, as exemplified by a statement made by a leading xeno expert who declared over a decade ago that because primates were genetically and evolutionarily *too* close to humans they harbored significant dangers. That is, they could easily transmit species-specific life-pathogens in ways that pigs, presumably, would not. (The potential danger of porcine pathogens has nevertheless been a point of significant debate and has led to moratoria in many countries that now block attempts to implant experimental porcine xenografts in humans.) His statement now echoes throughout the halls of xeno conferences as a means to reconfigure the union between humans and primates as an unproductive and, ultimately, incestuous one. In the end, primates are no longer desired as mates, but have been reconfigured as pariahs, standing outside the social imaginary of xeno science. Today, baboons and macaques occupy a transitional or liminal position, employed by researchers as proxies for humans when they wish to test the effects of porcine grafts on primate bodies (in anticipation of reaping knowledge that could prove useful when porcine xenografts are implanted in human primates). Pigs, on the other hand, as an evolutionary and socially more distant species, can be manipulated genetically so they might one day emerge as an altogether different, and newly imagined, perfect partner.

## Conclusion: Hybrids and the Scientific Imaginary

Hybridity clearly raises troubling questions about ambiguous body boundaries. Hybrid bodies, after all, are frequently strange amalgamations of disparate shapes and substances, and they nag at presumed assumptions about the integrity or discrete

qualities we regularly assign to specific creatures. Although lay (and activist) responses may quickly foreground the uncanny or troubled nature of seemingly monstrous pairings, at issue, too, are the ways in which involved scientists themselves think about the making of hybrids as a simultaneously experimental and social process. What are the sociomoral parameters of such work? How do hybrids figure within the scientific imaginary?

Of special concern to me have been questions of how scientists who specialize specifically in xenotransplantation imagine, and think through, the unusual and uncanny "nature" of their desired creations. It would be truly hazardous to conceive of xeno as a solid and static domain of science; rather, the moral parameters that frame xeno mark it as an emergent discipline. Thus, by imposing a temporal frame on xeno, one encounters shifting interests in and desires for diverse hybrid species. The values xeno experts assign to various animals change as one moves across different registers of meaning, too. Xeno science is faced with the paired immunological and social hurdles of mastering interspecies "compatibility" within singular bodies. At those moments when newly imagined pairings are first conceived, desires driven by the marketplace weigh most heavily on xeno science. Nevertheless, other moral challenges and social dilemmas inherent in hybrid couplings eventually initiate a series of strategic shifts as xeno scientists struggle to legitimate interspecies experiments.

As Franklin and McKinnon have argued, "the symbolic density of substances and codes that come to signify kinship … are as thick and dense with meanings as their negotiations are delicate and subtle" (Franklin and McKinnon 2001: Introduction 10). Within the moral imagination of xeno science, hybrid bodies undergo a sequence of transitions where each further unravels a dense knot of troubled values. First and foremost, the monstrous qualities assigned to hybrids are transformed – and, thus, reenculturated. Xeno scientists draw heavily on the trope of compatibility, such that certain animals then shoulder the promises assigned to them as newly-imagined partners and, in turn, categories of kin. At such moments, scientists thus activate the morality of kinship. For instance, the evolutionary proximity of apes and monkeys, understood as our "close cousins," facilitates their reassignment as "ideal matches" within a realm of science intent on creating hybrid bodies. In partnership with primates, xeno science imagines it might one day alleviate organ scarcity and save the lives of terminally ill patients who futilely await donated human parts.

These newly imagined bonds of interspecies kinship are thus simultaneously utilitarian and sentimental in character. If kinship is an inherently moral process whose character unfolds over time, then intimate bonds do indeed insist on complex, enduring social responses. As Bloch reminds us, the failure to act appropriately may eventually place one outside the moral order (again, see Bloch 1973). These sorts of moral dilemmas emerge not simply within small-scale communities, but within contexts framed by experimental science, too. As Franklin and McKinnon similarly assert, kinship is not merely about inclusion, belonging, or solidarity; it may also engender violent "acts of disconnection or rupture" (Franklin and McKinnon 2001: Introduction 18). The presumed intimate bonds of interspecies matching inevitably oblige primate "donors" to give quite literally of themselves to humans. When they later proved to be incompatible matches, they reemerged as a newly conceived category of failed, albeit serviceable, outcasts. As noted above, monkeys and apes are now employed within xeno science solely as transitional, experimental subjects whose

bodies might generate important knowledge that could inform the success of future porcine-to-human body transfers. In the end, these former mates now closely approximate mere work objects (Hogle 1995; Sharp 2002).

In response to such failures, the pig has now displaced our primate "cousins," standing in as the new darling of xeno research. Pigs are currently imagined as robust, easily altered genetically, marvelously prolific, and fertile creatures. As such, transgenic pigs now bear the promises of a newly fashioned category of hybrid vigor. The sentimental musings focused specifically on the transgenic breed sow reveal that, within a newly imagined species hierarchy, she far surpasses the temperamental and less productive ape or monkey. Simians proved too close for comfort, embodying the dangers of proximity assigned to incestuous unions and so now, today, xeno science is wed to the pig as its perfect, future partner.

Unquestionably, the consequences of hybridity should concern anthropologists working at the intersection of science studies. A fruitful beginning entails approaching scientific research as an inherently sociomoral enterprise. This is especially important when research assumes experimental or anticipatory dimensions, and where ambiguity propagates. It is at those very moments of conflict and ambiguity that embedded moral meanings surface (again, see Taylor 2005), and where various frameworks then provide ways to uncover their relative value. The scientific imagination is characterized by deeply embedded sentiments that reorder contradictions and legitimate laboratory work (and subsequent social consequences). More specifically within xeno, the values assigned to monstrous couplings, interspecies compatibility, evolutionary proximity, anatomical equivalence, and the obligations imposed on donor species expose the complex workings of scientific desire to reconfigure bodies and social boundaries. After all, hybridity – like kinship – is not merely about shared substance, or sameness; it is also about sentimental structures and moral obligations, as evidenced by desires within xeno science to conceive radically new types of interspecies bodies.

## Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank L. Bishop, B. Boyd, M. Cords, C. Marean, and J. Marks for their helpful comments on the evolutionary proximity of humans and swine. The ethnographic research that informs this essay was funded by several faculty grants; and by the National Science Foundation (Award #0750897). Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

## REFERENCES

Bartkowski, Frances, 2008 Kissing Cousins: A New Kinship Bestiary. New York: Columbia University Press.

Beidelman, T. O., 1993 Moral Imagination in Kaguru Modes of Thought. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Bloch, Maurice, 1973 The Long Term and the Short Term: The Economic and Political Significance of the Morality of Kinship. *In* The Character of Kinship. J. Goody, ed. pp. 75–87. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cooper, David K. C., 2007 René Kuss's Clinical Experience with Pig Kidney Transplantation in 1966 (Letter to the Editors). Xenotransplantation 14: 93.

Copeman, Jacob, 2005 Veinglory: Exploring Processes of Blood Transfer Between Persons. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 11: 465–485.

DelVecchio Good, Mary-Jo, 2001 The Biotechnical Embrace. Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry 25(4): 395–410.

DelVecchio Good, Mary-Jo, 2007 The Biotechnical Embrace and the Medical Imaginary. *In* Subjectivity: Ethnographic Investigations. J. Biehl, B. Good, and A. Kleinman, eds. pp. 362–380. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Deschamps, Jack-Yves, Françoise A. Roux, Pierre Saï and Edouard Gouin, 2005 History of Xenotransplantation. Xenotransplantation 12(2): 91–109.

Douglas, Mary, 1966 Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo. New York: Praeger.

Downey, Gary, Joe Dumit, and Sharon Traweek, eds., 1997 Cyborgs and Citadels: Anthropological Investigations in Emerging Sciences and Technology. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.

Edwards, Jeanette, Sarah Franklin, Eric Hirsch, Frances Price, and Marilyn Strathern, 1993 Technologies of Procreation: Kinship in the Age of Assisted Conception. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Fox, Renée C., and Judith P. Swazey, 1992 Spare Parts: Organ Replacement in American Society. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Franklin, Sarah, 2003 Kinship, Genes and Cloning: Life After Dolly. *In* Genetic Nature / Culture: Anthropology and Science Beyond the Two-Culture Divide. A.H. Goodman, D. Heath, and M.S. Lindee, eds. pp. 95–110. Berkeley: University of California.

Franklin, Sarah, 2007 Dolly Mixtures: The Remaking of Genealogy. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Franklin, Sarah and Margaret Lock, 2003 Animation and Cessation: The Remaking of Life and Death. *In* Remaking Life and Death: Toward an Anthropology of the Biosciences. S. Franklin and M. Lock, eds. pp. 3–22. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.

Franklin, Sarah and Susan McKinnon, eds., 2001 Relative Values: Reconfiguring Kinship Studies. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Georges, Eugenia, 1996 Fetal Ultrasound Imaging and the Production of Authoritative Knowledge in Greece. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 10(2): 157–175.

Gray, C.H., ed., 1995 The Cyborg Handbook. New York: Routledge.

Guyer, Jane I., 2007 Prophecy and the Near Future: Thoughts on Macroeconomic, Evangelical, and Punctuated Time. American Ethnologist 34(3): 409–421.

Haraway, Donna J., 1989 Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science. New York: Routledge.

Haraway, Donna J., 1992 The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate / d Others. *In* Cultural Studies. L. Grossberg, C. Nelson, and P. Treichler, eds. pp. 295–337. New York: Routledge.

Haraway, Donna J., 1997 Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium.FemaleMan[c]_Meets_ Onco Mouse™: Feminism and Technoscience. New York: Routledge.

Haraway, Donna J., 2003a Cloning Mutts, Saving Tigers. *In* Remaking Life and Death: Towards an Anthropology of the Biosciences. S. Franklin and M. Lock, eds. pp. 293–327. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.

Haraway, Donna J., 2003b The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press.

Hayden, Cori, 2003 From Market to Market: Bioprospecting's Idioms of Inclusion. American Ethnologist 303(3): 359–371.

Helmreich, Stefan, 2009 Alien Ocean: Anthropological Voyages in Microbial Seas. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hogle, Linda F., 1995 Tales from the Cryptic: Technology Meets Organism in the Living Cadaver. *In* The Cyborg Handbook. C.H. Gray, ed. pp. 203–216. New York: Routledge.

Hunt, Sharon A., 2006 Taking Heart – Cardiac Transplantation Past, Present, and Future. New England Journal of Medicine 355(3): 231–235.

Kristeva, Julia, 1982 Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection. New York: Columbia University Press.

Latour, Bruno, 1987 Science in Action. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Livingston, Julie, 2005 Debility and the Moral Imagination in Botswana. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Lock, Margaret, 2002 Twice Dead: Organ Transplants and the Reinvention of Death. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Martin, E., 1994 Flexible Bodies: Tracking Immunity in American Culture From the Days of Polio to the Age of AIDS. Boston: Beacon Press.

Messinger, Seth D., 2009 Incorporating the Prosthetic: Traumatic Limb-Loss, Rehabilitation and Refigured Military Bodies. Disability and Rehabilitation 31(25): 2130–2134.

Mitchell, Lisa M., and Eugenia Georges, 1997 Cross-Cultural Cyborgs: Greek and Canadian Women's Discourses on Fetal Ultrasound. Feminist Studies 23(2): 373–401.

Morgan, Lynn M., 1999 Materializing the Fetal Body, Or, What Are Those Corpses Doing in Biology's Basement? *In* Fetal Subjects, Feminist Positions. L.M. Morgan and M.W. Michaels, eds. pp. 43–60. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Morgan, Lynn M., 2009 Icons of Life: A Cultural History of Human Embryos. Berkeley. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Pálsson, Gísli, and Kristín E. Hardardóttir, 2002 For Whom the Cell Tolls: Debates about Biomedicine. Current Anthropology 43(2): 271–287, 297–301.

Papagaroufali, Eleni, 1996 Xenotransplantation and Transgenesis: Immoral Stories about Human–Animal Relations in the West. *In* Nature and Society: Anthropological Perspectives. P. Descola and G. Pálsson, eds. pp. 240–255. New York: Routledge.

Rabinow, Paul, 1992 Artificiality and Enlightenment: From Sociobiology to Biosociality. *In* Incorporations: Zone 6. J. Crary and S. Kwinter, eds. pp. 234–252. New York: Urzone.

Ragoné, Heléna, 1996 Chasing the Blood Tie: Surrogate Mothers, Adoptive Mothers and Fathers. American Ethnologist 23(2): 352–365.

Ragoné, Heléna, 1999 The Gift of Life: Surrogate Motherhood, Gamete Donation and Constructions of Altruism. *In* Transformative Motherhood: On Giving and Getting in a Consumer Culture. L. Layne, ed. pp. 65–87. New York: New York University Press.

Rapp, Rayna, 2000 Testing Women, Testing the Fetus: The Social Impact of Amniocentesis in America. New York: Routledge.

Rapp, Rayna, Deborah Heath, and Karen-Sue Taussig, 2001 Genealogical Dis-Ease: Where Hereditary Abnormality, Biomedical Explanation, and Family Responsibility Meet. *In* Relative Values: Reconfiguring Kinship Studies. S. Franklin and S. McKinnon, eds. pp. 384–409. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Rose, Nikolas, 2001 The Politics of Life Itself. Theory, Culture and Society 18(6): 1–30.

Schneider, David M., 1980 (1965) American Kinship: A Cultural Account. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sharp, Lesley A., 2001 Commodified Kin: Death, Mourning, and Competing Claims on the Bodies of Organ Donors in the United States. American Anthropologist 103(1): 1–21.

Sharp, Lesley A., 2002 Bodies, Boundaries, and Territorial Disputes: Investigating the Murky Realm of Scientific Authority. Medical Anthropology 21: 371–381.

Sharp, Lesley A., 2006 Strange Harvest: Organ Transplants, Denatured Bodies, and the Transformed Self. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Sharp, Lesley A., 2009 Bioengineered Bodies and the Moral Imagination. [for: Perspectives: The Art of Medicine.]. Lancet 374: 970–971.

Sharp, Lesley A., in press Monkey Business: Interspecies Longing and Scientific Prophecy in Experimental Xenotransplantation. *In* Interspecies. Theme issue, Social Text 29(1), Spring 2011.

Strathern, Marilyn, 1992 The Meaning of Assisted Kinship. *In* Changing Human Reproduction: Social Science Perspectives. M. Stacey, ed. pp. 148–169. London: Sage Publishers.

Sunder Rajan, Kaushik, 2006 Biocapital: The Constitution of Postgenomic Life. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Taussig, Karen-Sue, 2004 Bovine Abominations: Genetic Culture and Politics in the Netherlands. Cultural Anthropology 19(3): 305–336.

Taylor, Janelle S., 2005 Surfacing the Body's Interior. Annual Review of Anthropology 34: 741–56.

Taylor, Janelle S., 2008 The Public Life of the Fetal Sonogram: Technology, Consumption, and the Politics of Reproduction. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Wilson, Peter J., 1971 Sentimental Structure: Tsimihety Migration and Descent. American Anthropologist 73(1): 193–208.

CHAPTER 15

# IMPAIRMENT
## *Sporting Bodies: Sensuous, Lived and Impaired*

*P. David Howe*

> "When we attend to our experiences not as intangible minds but as speaking bodies, we begin to sense that we are heard, even listened to, by the numerous other bodies that surround us. Our sensing bodies respond to the eloquence of certain buildings and boulders, to the articulate motions of dragonflies. We find ourselves alive in a listening, speaking world."
>
> (Abram 1996: 86)

These words from Abram remind us that being in the world is a sensuous experience. The purpose of this chapter is to highlight how ethnographic accounts, in this case of an impaired running body, can act as a stimulus to our senses and help shape our interpretation of the world. In the following vignette, taken and adapted from field diaries written when I was undertaking research on the Paralympic Games, the body that is present is mine; because of its impaired nature it was explicitly a focal point for this study. Following the vignette the chapter will examine how the disciplined and habitual body can be a catalyst for a robust phenomenological exploration of the sensuous, lived and impaired body.

*The air was still and as the day dawned the humidity was very high. It is 8 in the morning and the temperature is already close to eighty degrees Fahrenheit. I haul my body into an upright position on the end of the bed and begin to scramble for my running clothing. The clothes I find were worn for last evenings training session. As a result the manmade fibres have trapped day old sweat – a result of the physical effort of yesterdays training session so that the garments smell like my cat has "relieved" himself on them. These are the only*

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

*set that is partly clean that my sponsors have given me and in the modern age of sport commercialism it is important for me to be seen in their product. As a sponsored athlete at times I look and feel like a billboard. On this particular morning the smell of dried, unwashed polypropylene on a hot and already humid morning is not a pleasant aroma. It awakens my senses but I feel a rather soiled billboard.*

*After I am dressed I proceed to engage in the ritual of twisting and contorting my body that is commonly referred to as stretching. These exercises are designed to loosen and make my body a bit more supple than it would be otherwise if I had just simply sprung out of bed. After this 15 minute ritual I am ready to hit the streets but today this in itself is not a simple endeavour. Several days ago I moved with a large contingent of athletes into the Paralympic Village housed at Georgia State University and security to get off campus is tight. In order to achieve this I go through two sets of security. As a member of the Canadian Team at the 1996 Paralympics in Atlanta Georgia we had been housed with the Israeli Team. This entailed going through a checkpoint outside our residence each and every time we exited the building. On this particular morning I am not held up as I leave the building but I do exit through a scanning device through which everyone must pass. These precautions may have been a response to events at the 1972 Olympics in Munich where 11 of Israel's athletes and a German police officer were assassinated by a Palestinian militant group known as Black September. The check point immediately outside the building is an inconvenience but on another level understandable. For my ambulant body it is simply a case of walking through the scanner but for those athletes that use a wheelchair as a mobility aid they are required to transfer to another wheelchair in order that both their body and their chair can be scanned separately. As most wheelchairs are at least partly made of metal they need to be independently checked rather than being processed through the scanning system. Once out into the Paralympic Village I head for another security gate as there is not enough room to do a "proper" run within the boundary of this compact village that is only about half a mile in circumference.*

*Once through the Village entrance and out on to the streets of Atlanta I am confronted with the abject poverty that is stereotypically seen as the hallmark of inner city America. The ghetto that abuts Georgia State University is not a constant war zone where children are unruly and everyone is on welfare. Nor is it an area where only African Americans live. It is an impoverished part of the city which the middle classes avoid if possible and certainly would not run through. I am however a visitor to this city and when I take a right turn out of the Paralympic Village within about 400 m I am in an impoverished environment that is reminiscent of a ghetto and I feel I am being observed on a number of levels as an outsider. I do not feel as if it is my skin colour that makes me stand out as I see a variety of white, black and Hispanic people observing me quizzically from the relative cool of their verandas but rather the manner in which my body moves through the streets.*

*On this hot humid morning as I gradually shift into a cadence that is both comfortable and (in relative terms) efficient my skin begins to redden as my body begins attempting to regulate the heat from my mortal engine. In quick succession my rosy skin begins to secrete salty sweat and this makes me feel alive. The pungent odour coming from my clothing which thirty-five minutes ago seemed unbearable and was a catalyst to get me moving is now a vital component of the sensuous experience of the morning's run which, as often is the case is a heady mix of hard work, exhilaration and an unmistakeable sense of freedom are embodied within the simultaneous physical movement of my body and spirit.*

*As I move through the hot and humid streets of Atlanta from the socially deprived inner city toward the affluent suburbs my movement constantly draws attention. In the so called inner city ghetto it could be the simple act of going for a run that draws the gaze of the locals but in the middle class suburbs where runners are much more common it is more likely my ungainly running style. My body, while lean, toned and athletic is far from perfect. I am congenitally impaired with a form of cerebral palsy that is known medically as hemiplegia which means that one hemisphere of my body's (the right in my case) movement is often hindered by an abnormal degree of spasticity which means that it is at times difficult for me to control my physical movement. Fortunately running, the sport I love, is as simple as putting one leg in front of the other – a straightforward pastime which I pursue with the hunger that is the same as that of an Olympic middle to long distance runner. Frequently I cover over 100 miles in a week during the winter and this amount of running makes the physical action of running habitual. However, due to my impairment I lack the ability to embody a normalised aesthetic.*

*The degree to which my impaired body can adopt a normalised aesthetic can be determined by climatic conditions. For example my body does not function as effectively when it is cold as circulation to the affected side of my body is more limited in such conditions and as a result spasticity increases. In other words there are times and places where the degree of my impairment is more severe than others. The degree to which I can undertake certain basic tasks is also impeded. Fortunately the climatic conditions during the summer in Atlanta are ideal for allowing my body to perform at its very best.*

*As my morning run draws to a close I am at one with my body but in a way I am continually observing it. Because of my impairment that brings with it weakness and spasticity to my right side I am constantly scanning the ground in the manner of an internal early warning system. In this way I try to avoid any uneven ground that has the potential to cause regular and painful falls. Curb-sides and badly maintained urban sidewalks are the worse "offenders" leading to falls at least four times a year. These falls are sensuous because of the pain (and embarrassment) that they invariably entail, but also because I leave a fair amount of skin behind. In this respect my run today was not sensuous but it does give me an opportunity to explore the use of my body as a tool for increasing our understanding of the embodied nature of one of the simplest sport practices – the act of running.*

*As I make my way back to the Paralympic Village, through the colourful neighbourhoods of Atlanta, my mouth feels like a desert. I am desperate for a drink of water and some electrolyte replacement. On getting to security at the village gate I show my accreditation and pass smoothly through the checkpoint. Walking now, sweaty, sticky but vibrantly alive, I gather a sports drink and a bottle of water from a refrigerated vending machine and head for a shady spot on the grass near my dorm. Consuming the liquids, which at this moment seem to be the essence of life – I stretch. I begin to think about "fuelling" my body at breakfast, how good my shower and the bed, though very different pleasures, will feel against my slightly fatigued body. Disciplining myself I move toward the cafeteria and begin dreaming about my early evening run!*

The body at the center of the vignette is a sensuous body, shaped and reshaped in an environment that is at the same time also being shaped by this body. In other words the body that is the focus of the vignette is co-produced (Howe and Morris 2009); by that I mean the material environment helps physically shape my body but the embodied actions in which I engage also transform both the physical environment and the

interpretative social environment. The transformation that the body enacts might in part be a direct response to the discipline that has been embodied through the act of engaging with high-performance running.

Since the beginning of the 1980s there has been a proliferation of social scientific scholarly activity designed to explore the importance of the body in society (see Featherstone et al. 1991; Shilling 2003 [1993]; Turner 1996). Today there is scholarly activity looking at the importance of the body in a variety of social environments. In the discipline of anthropology, for example, the focus on the body was often never made explicit since the very nature of the ethnographic enterprise breathed life into communities and made such research necessarily embodied (Lock 1993). Sport has to a limited extent become a focus of body research (Blake 1996) with the works of social theorists like Bourdieu (1977, 1984, 1990), Foucault (1977) and Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1965) being the vehicles that those working in the area of sports studies might use to explore the importance of the body. I will now go on to briefly discuss Paralympic bodies, making a distinction between congenital and acquired impairment. This should give the reader an understanding of the cultural specificity of the body central to the vignette while also setting the stage for the more theoretical and methodologically driven discussion to follow.

## Paralympic Bodies

The running, jumping, swimming or simply moving bodies of impaired athletes have continually been judged in relation to an able-bodied "norm" and the standards of play and performance are compared with those of mainstream competitions. This can have an adverse effect on participation rates within sport for the disabled, as their bodies just do not match up to the able-bodied norm.

> It is through the study of the body in the context of, and in relation to, sport that we can understand sport as one of the sites for the reproduction of social inequality in its promotion of the traditional view of athletic performance, masculinity, and physicality, including gendered images of the ideal physique and body beautiful (DePauw 1997: 420).

Sport is an embodied practice and, as such, many people who possess less than normal bodies may shy away from the masculine physicality associated with it. For sportsmen and women with an impairment the manner in which they are embodied often marks them out for "special" treatment in society, as their bodies highlight these individuals in a meaningful way as imperfect and therefore inadequate. This is because a lack of a physical impairment is seen as normal – so the imperfect body highlights the opposite – a lack of normality.

In the context of Paralympic sport there are two broad types of body that exist – those with congenital impairments and those whose impairments were acquired. Both types of body will have traveled different roads before they became involved in Paralympic sport. Individuals with congenital impairments may, until recently, have attended what in the West are commonly referred to as "special" schools. Early congenitally impaired Paralympians would have perhaps got their first exposure to sport through adapted physical activity classes at their school. These early experiences will

have been instrumental in shaping the sporting experiences of these individuals. In many cases today, congenitally impaired individuals are schooled in inclusive environments, although, depending on the nature of the impairment, they may or may not engage in a segregated physical education environment. Regardless of the type of access they have to organized sport the socialization of these young people will be different from those who went to special schools.

Those who come to Paralympic sport as a result of a traumatic accident, such as a car crash, are often socialized differently than congenitally impaired individuals. If a traumatic injury occurred in their youth these individuals may also have attended a special school or had adapted physical activity classes as their introduction to sport. If the traumatic injury happened after the age when young people attend school there is bound to be a period of transition to the new bodily circumstances. These individuals, regardless of age, go through a process of rehabilitation where their bodies need to be retrained, often in the most basic tasks such as the management of daily hygiene regimes. In anthropological terms these bodies can be seen to take center stage in our lives. Following Seymour these individuals can be seen to be re-embodied. That is "embodiment is our life-long obsession. Eating, sleeping, washing, grooming, stimulating and entertaining our bodies dominate our lives"(Seymour 1998: 4) regardless of our state of impairment. After these individuals have relearned basic tasks, or perhaps alongside these activities, they become in essence re-embodied, that is they learn some of what their "new" body can and cannot do in an adaptive physical activity setting where sport will feature.

The body at the center of this chapter is congenitally impaired.

Some might expect that a body that engages in Paralympic sport should somehow be treated differently than an able body. However, the Paralympic movement adopts the same sport paradigm as the Olympic movement and therefore is ultimately about physical superiority of one body over another. In other words in an environment such as sport, where the body is essential, imperfection becomes evident. DePauw (1997) has examined how sport marginalizes those who possess impaired or imperfect bodies and argues that we need to re-examine the relationship between sport and the body as it relates to disability.

> Ability is at the centre of sport and physical activity. Ability, as currently socially constructed, means "able" and implies a finely tuned "able" body. On the other hand, disability, also a social construction, is often viewed in relation to ability and is, then, most often defined as "less than" ability, as not able. To be able to "see" individuals with disabilities as athletes (regardless of the impairment) requires us to redefine athleticism and our view of the body, especially the sporting body (DePauw 1997: 423).

This is a laudable goal, which to date has not been achieved. The body that ran through the streets of Atlanta over fifteen years ago is perhaps even more marginalized today than it was when DePauw wrote the comment above, as the Paralympic movement has recently placed further restrictions upon the participation of certain impairment groups (see Howe 2008) as the push to become a fully commercial sporting practice continues at pace.

How can we begin to get to grips with the sensuous nature of the impaired running body? This chapter will discuss several theoretical positions designed to explore the

body. What they collectively offer is a more sensuous understanding of the body. The following theoretical discussions, of the disciplined body, habitus and habit are presented to highlight how these concepts used in harmony can bring sensuousness to the written two-dimensional representation of the lived body. To this end the chapter finishes by discussing the value of a particular methodological tool, specifically phenomenologically informed autoethnography.

## The Disciplined Body

Foucault's conceptualization of discipline as seen in *Discipline and Punish* (1977) is instrumental in understanding the body (my body) that is central to the vignette above. This conceptualization of the socially disciplined body has also been in one form or other, perhaps unconsciously, a focus for good running coaches' training procedures for generations. By drawing the connection between the practical experience of an elite athlete's environment and my training in anthropology, I will be able to offer insight into the role of my impaired body in shaping the world that I run through in a sensuous manner.

Early work explicitly surrounding the body found both sport and physical activity a productive research landscape. In the 1980s Featherstone commented that physical activity is often undertaken for the simple pleasures that it brings to those who enjoy it and not the utilitarian values that are often associated with it.

> The notion of running for running's sake, purposiveness without a purpose, a sensuous experience in harmony with embodied physical nature, is completely submerged amidst the welter of benefits called up by the markets and health experts (Featherstone 1991: 185–186).

While participation in leisure activities may initially be due to the enjoyment felt by the person involved, individuals, while they may notice what is happening in and to the body, are often unaware of the changes that are occurring in their mind as a result of the physical requirements of participation. In the process of partaking in physical exercise the individual unconsciously objectifies the values of society that are appropriate to such activities and thus the individual's mind becomes the caretaker of its socially disciplined body. Specifically Foucault referred to these social processes as technologies of power (Markula and Pringle 2006). This focus on the body as a political object that can be controlled has been influential in the sport studies research that sees the body and embodiment as a central tenet (Hargreaves 1986; Rail and Harvey 1995) as well as the production of distinctive sporting bodies (Markula and Pringle 2006).

According to the work of Foucault (1977), power is focused upon the body, which as a result may be seen as a formation or product of hegemonic interaction. In this sense the body may be seen as an object that is transformed through power relationships.

> Foucault regards medical science as the crucial kink at the level of knowledge between the discipline of individual bodies by professional groups (of psychiatrists, dietitians, social workers and others) and the regulation of populations by panopticism (in the form of asylums, factories, schools and hospitals). (Turner 1996: 63)

In the context of sport the body can be disciplined through the creation of training regimes that routinely replicate the skills required to be successful in your chosen sport. Enhancing performance entails "[a] system of expansive discipline and surveillance [that] produces normal persons by making each individual as visible as possible to each other, and by meticulous work on person's bodies at the instigation of subjects themselves" (Hargreaves 1987: 151).

By engaging in such meticulous work, my body, by the time of the vignette above, had been drilled in the art of running for more than 15 years and as such it was well disciplined. The body in the vignette is also disciplined through the surveillance of the checkpoint controls in the Paralympic village. This form of surveillance is a hallmark of major international sporting festivals: every-*body* that came into the village was subjected to the same checks. Such security is a sensuous experience to the uninitiated as the body is often poked, prodded and at times frisked in a manner that to most is seen as an invasion of personal space.

In order to obtain a sensuous reading of sporting bodies it is important that the Foucauldian disciplined body is not seen in isolation from other ways of conceptualizing embodied practice. Of particular use are the concept of habitus and habits.

## Habitus and Habit

Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus may be seen to be related to Foucault's concept of discipline since "the body is used (walks, carries itself) differently by different social groups, and sport is one of the most important ways that the body's *habitus* is learned" (Blake 1996: 23). In *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Bourdieu 1977) the training and actions associated with gymnastics are cultural products that are transformed by those individuals who practice them either as coaches or athletes. By extension, other physical activities such as training for high-performance running may be seen to embody the distinctive nature of that sporting practice. By conceptualizing the sporting body in this manner it may be seen to be disciplined on a personal level through the training, for example, that an elite impaired runner undertakes to have the fitness to perform on the international stage. Habitus of the body is established where exercises and drills are repeated until they become automatic. In a sense then, a running body (impaired or otherwise), in the discipline and habitus of training becomes what could be called an "*autobody*" (Howe 2004).

To Bourdieu habitus informs action like grammar structures a language, which can allow for multiple forms of expression through the body, whether it is how the body moves or how it is covered (Bourdieu 1984). Social agents are players in a game actively working toward achieving a goal with acquired skills and competence but doing so within an established structure of rules, which is only gradually transformed over time. Habitus predisposes action by agents but does not reduce them to a position of complete subservience. It is Foucault's notion of discipline, rather than Bourdieu's habitus, which better delivers an explanation of how the elite sporting performer reacts when there is a power relationship, as there often is between coach and performer. For Foucault, power is omnipresent (Markula and Pringle 2006) and therefore in the relationship between the coach and the athlete success on the sports field is in part heavily dependent on how well the athlete listens to

advice, is controlled in his or her training and is compliant with the rules and regulations of the sporting practice.

The theory of practice developed by Bourdieu (1977, 1984), on the other hand, identifies the nexus between the body and the social environment surrounding it. Bourdieu sees the relationship as a mathematical equation [(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice (Bourdieu 1984: 101), where habitus is a combination of various habitual schema and dispositions, multiplied by capital of an appropriate form (i.e. cultural or economic) in addition to social conditions which have over time been structured to develop in such a specific manner.

In a sporting context, then, the games metaphor that is employed by Bourdieu in the non sporting context (1984) highlights the nexus between capital and field. The multiplication of a player's disposition, their competence (habitus) and the resources at his or her disposal (capital) in relation to the social environment highlights the social actor's position in the world. In the particular environment that is elite sport it is the embodied disposition or doxa that enables a social exploration that illuminates the distinctive character of sporting practice. In a sense, embodied sporting practice is made up of the habitual disposition established through the training drills that might be part of a traditional training regime and the desire to actually participate in a competition. Sporting practice is therefore structured at a number of levels, with improvisation grounded in sediments of previous sporting activities. There are personal and team-oriented training, structures that are evident from rules and regulations that have been codified by the sporting federations that all structure the game but still allow room for improvisation on the part of the player. Fields therefore allow the social scientist to see beyond the body as object and allow for an appropriate conceptualization within the sporting environment. On the other hand, capital allows for the exploration of the issues associated with exchange value, which a disposition may have in a particular social field.

Within a given field there is still room for self expression, and it is as important to see the body as a product of the self as much as it is of society. This is most evident when a sporting contest is observed. While the sport of track and field athletics adopts specific rules (any transgressors ideally are penalized) a sporting performance is full of improvisation, much like good jazz. Some sports are more dependent than others on improvisation. In track and field athletics, for example, improvisation can be beneficial, whereas in figure skating it is not.

> Both sports and jazz share this element of moving, of improvisation, an element which pulls against the rationalised and bureaucratised view of aesthetics which has dominated the criticism of the arts as well as sport in the West since the Renaissance (Blake 1996: 201).

To Shilling (2003) the self project of the body is an area where self expression is the norm and where individualism is allowed to flourish. At the heart of this view is an embodied consumer culture, which has had a tremendous influence on sporting culture including that which surrounds the Paralympic Games (see Howe 2008). There is a degree of freedom to act in particular ways but the training regimes discipline and form habits in the body that to a greater or lesser extent need to be engaged in order to be successful in the field of sport. The habits created by training as an elite runner act as a vehicle for understanding how the body can be manipulated to serve the

sporting performer. An examination of habitus and discipline as highlighted by the vignette above can go some way to acknowledging the body as a sensuous realm for fruitful research. Yet it has been suggested by Crossley (2001) that we must go back to a Cartesian understanding of the body to really establish what we are after in studies of bodies. According to Crossley, researchers of the body are after the nexus between the mind and the body. In other words, all social actors are at once both mindful and embodied and as a result the distinction that Descartes makes needs to be more closely examined. Ryle (1949) suggests that the dualism of Descartes should be questioned due to the fact that there are physical acts which are also mental. An example of this is the act of talking to oneself. Speech requires physical action from the body but an agent can also be internalized in the mind. The next stage may be seen as habits that may be seen as autoresponses of the mind and body which are triggered in a specific social context such as a hot a humid morning run.

Physical action that becomes embodied in certain situations may be seen as habitual and these acts are often drilled into an actor through countless repetition that lacks imagination, such as the simple act of running through the streets of Atlanta. Habitual acts that are further developed by improvisation can be considered dispositions (Ryle 1949). A disposition comprises drill but is more flexible in the manner in which it is administered but is still achieved without conscious thought before the action. The disposition to run to the point of physical pain in training, frequently but not daily, is fundamental to an elite runner and this requires more than technical skill and physical fitness. The disposition is the embodied ability to put the habitual training together in such a way that it can be quickly adapted to suit any situation.

Given a social situation our disposition will suggest that we are likely act in a certain way. This distinction between habit and disposition is useful in that it explores the notion of human intervention in the sporting environment. What can be confusing, however, is that both Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1965) and Bourdieu (1984, 1992) use the terms habit, habitus and disposition interchangeably.

Merleau-Ponty (1962) understands that the relationship between an agent and the environment cannot be explored independently of the idea that the environment at some level is subjective to the agent. Perception of the environment is then seen as an embodied activity. The agent who perceives can be seen to be an effect of the perception rather than its cause. In other words it is the social meaning attached to the environment around a social interaction that has a fundamental influence upon our behavior or disposition. Merleau-Ponty acknowledges that there may be issues of innate understanding in relation to perception but his primary concern is the role played by habitual schemas of perception, which have social value.

Focusing on football (soccer) Merleau-Ponty in *The Structure of Behaviour* (1965) reflects upon perception and action of agent on the field of play.

> For the player in action the football field is not an "object", that is, the ideal term which can give rise to an indefinite multiplicity of perspectival views and remain equivalent under its apparent transformation. It is pervaded with lines of force (the "yard lines"; those which demarcate the "penalty area") and articulated in sectors (for example, the "openings" between adversaries) which call for a certain mode of action and which initiate and guide the action as if the player were unaware of it. (Merleau-Ponty 1965: 168)

The footballer is engaged in the action that takes place on the field and is controlled by the constraints upon action that are part of the game. For example an agent who has a disposition for football will see openings on the field where someone without such a disposition would not see the openings. Even the spectator who has an understanding if not a disposition for the game will see the game differently than the player on the field, and the speed with which a player embraces reflective action will often be directly related to the success of the habitual drills that have been carried out on the training field. If the player is good, action will be spontaneous. In team sports where there are many different skill levels abilities will often be on a par for many of the players in the same game. Most of all, players find the game a "normal environment" in part because of the training they undertake before they play. In a sense the game can be a "virtual reality of human construction" (Crossley 2001: 76). During the game it is not reflected upon as it happens in the spaces between players and how they perceive and act, their perceptions and actions are at the same time shaped by the game and reflect its structure. In this sense actors can be seen not to simply follow rules but to bend them, much in the way as the work of Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1965) highlights improvisation as being fundamental to an individual's disposition. Dispositions, or more generally forms of social competence, may be seen as a product of well-established social environments. In other words, while society may be seen as shaping agents it needs individuals' improvisations from time to time if it is going to evolve.

The physical action of a runner through the streets of Atlanta is strategic and the better the individual is the more embodied cultural capital or physical capital he possesses (Wacquant 2004). Qualities that are associated with elite sporting bodies such as strength, stamina and fitness are all part of a continuum of performance, and when an athlete achieves highly in any or all of these categories they will possess physical capital in the sporting environment (field) where those qualities are revered. While in competition, runners do not have the time to reflect upon their actions if they are to perform at the highest level. Moments of indecision on the track, which sporting spectators frequently observe, might just be a track and field athlete in a moment of reflection. However, if runners are to do their job well such moments should be eliminated. The arbitrariness of a given race can be reflected upon afterwards or in the mind of the spectator or even the anthropologist interested in the construction of sporting disposition and or habitus.

While some have suggested that although Bourdieu's work illuminates the importance of creativity it fails to highlight how social fields transform (Jenkins 1982), it could be argued that his work's emphasis on reproduction (Bourdieu 1977, 1984) is another way of articulating the same point. In much of his work Bourdieu has explored the concept of habitus before that of agency, and while this may seem odd, particularly in light of Merleau-Ponty's (1962) assertion that habits are but leftover sediment from previous action and as such the nexus between the two is unmistakable, it could be argued that the approach adopted by Bourdieu is rather like the proverbial debate about the chicken and egg and he has made a choice where Merleau-Ponty decided the link was too close to distinguish the relationship.

Merleau-Ponty's (1962) concept of corporeal schema articulates nicely the embodied agency of a runner both as an individual and as a member of the social environment surrounding sporting contests. The corporeal schema comprises the skills required for the performance and the practical understanding of the game that may be transformed depending on the action of other participants. A good player reads a game without

thinking. In other words they explore the relationship between different levels of structure that constrict movement at a subconscious level.

Commenting on the work of Merleau-Ponty Crossley suggests

> Habit involves a modification and enlargement of the corporeal schema, an incorporation of new "principles" of action and know-how, which permit new ways of acting and understanding. It is a sediment of past activity which remains alive in the present in the form of the structures of corporeal schema; shaping perception, conception, deliberation, emotion and action. (Crossley 2001: 125)

In fact the emphasis on innovation (Merleau-Ponty 1962) gives the runner the raw material to turn into habit. As a result innovative habits that are a product of creative praxis result in a diachronic shift in the social world.

It is important in the discussion below that the body – a sensuous body – can be understood through a marriage of concepts from the work of Foucault, surrounding the disciplining of body, Bourdieu, and his interpretation of the habitual nature of social practice, and last but by no means least Merleau-Ponty's reflection upon the sedimentary nature of action and the multiplicity of perspectives any-body can get from "being-in-the-world." Examining the body from numerous directions, we are able to get a sense of its essence, its three-dimensional presence that allows for a more sensuous reading. "Being-in-the-world" also conveys as sense of the method that might be best used to explore the sensuous nature of the impaired running body in the vignette. It is to methodological considerations that we now turn our attention.

## Being in a *Sensuous* World

The use of phenomenology has been central to good ethnography for a long time (Davies, 1997) because the self changes and transforms as well as (and sometimes along with) the social environment under investigation. By its very nature, then, the act of constructing an ethnographic account is autobiographical. "Fieldwork is personal, emotional and identity *work*." (Coffey 1999: 1). Yet it is not an exact reflection of the lived experience of the author since, "The writing and reading of ethnography are overdetermined by forces ultimately beyond the control of either an author or an interpretive community. These contingencies – of language, rhetoric, power and history – must now be openly confronted in the process of writing" (Clifford 1986: 25).

As a result ethnographic researchers are becoming more conscious that phenomenological experience impacts upon the data collected and written. By using reflexive ethnography to tell stories (as I have done above) and allowing readers to be the arbiters of meaning understanding can be enhanced (Ellis and Bochner 2000: Sparkes 2002). It is now more often than not the world of the ethnographer that is being explored. One of the dangers of this phenomenological position is that the truths discerned by self-examination may be too closely bound to the experience of the researcher and the categories of their culture. Yet again, like the vignette in this chapter, it is open to interpretation.

My aim here is to encourage what feminists refer to as standpoint epistemology that places the voice of the underrepresented at the center of research (see Brooks 2007).

Traditionally, this approach has focused on including voices of the marginalized or Other. Wendall (1996) has shown that this approach has value when centering the voices of impaired individuals. In the vignette that began this chapter, for example, my voice is central to the story while those who observe me running through the streets of Atlanta are silenced by my position as runner and anthropologist. The point is that had those who observed me written their story of the day their voices and reading of events would take center stage. Telling multiple stories would add a new dimension to this research but it would also take the focus away from the sensuous body, which this chapter is designed to highlight.

Using the phenomenological position of "being-in-the-world" the reflexive ethnographer adopting a standpoint epistemology can piece together the sensuousness of a sporting body. Because my body is fit and lean, but impaired, its position in physical action is at odds with the norm. In this way it is possible to articulate "disability is conceptualized as the social imposition of restrictions of activity on people with impairments" (Thomas 1999: 123). An ethnographer with impairment is therefore in a unique position to document what could be called *disability in action* – that is the impact of the impaired body on an otherwise "ordinary" space. Following Thomas (1999) the notion of disability in action is informed by an understanding of disability that is socially relational. That is, "The social relational formulation indicates that the term disability expresses an unequal power relationship between those who are socially constructed as "impaired" (the relatively powerless) and those who are identified as "nonimpaired" or "normal" in society (the relatively powerful)" (Thomas 1999: 124). The act of being an impaired body in a sporting space facilitates the opportunity to collect data on this power relationship.

The vignette that began this chapter highlighted the fact that my impaired body can from time to time make me more or less visible to the gaze in the streets of Atlanta. If my body is functioning well I might be able to "pass" (Goffman 1963) as able-bodied but when it is not I am more aware not only of it but of the stares I receive from others as a result of its impairment. Leder (1990), drawing on the work of Merleau-Ponty (1962), has argued the human body is a vehicle for living in the world but that unless it is brought to our attention it is not an object of our understanding. It is only when the average person is unwell or impaired their body "appears" – it is present in the actions of their daily life. The cerebral palsy that impairs me is a reminder that my body is always present.

## Sensing the Body

For many with mobility impairments, this bodily appearance is a constant because to a great or lesser extent the impaired have to continually evaluate the physical environment in an attempt to physically manage their bodies. Once attention has been drawn to the body, either through illness or impairment, it can become a focal point for the personal analysis of social interaction. The perception that people are staring at your body may impact the many ways in which you respond to questions and / or contribute to discussion and therefore experience sport and its distinct spaces. Being aware of your body therefore can shape discourse and as such is instrumental as a tool for ethnographic research. In his classic ethnography of impairment Murphy (1987) highlights how his body both becomes an object of attention for him as well as others.

"The body no longer can be taken for granted, implicit and axiomatic, for it has become a problem. It no longer is the subject of unconscious assumption, but the object of conscious thought" (Murphy 1987: 12). This is the case for both the impaired individual and the society that needs to deal with the "problem" created by the abnormal body. While in the conventional sense my body during my morning run is not a traditional problem it does provoke quizzical looks from people I pass on the streets; however, if my body and others like it were to move in next-door we might be seen as more of a problem. In other words, the difficulties in managing impaired bodies can put a strain on social systems which for some can be seen as problematic. This strain that is placed upon various social systems can be seen as the catalyst for attitudes that negatively impact upon the sporting experiences of impaired individuals. These attitudes as a collective, if left unchecked, can lead to disablism.

Disablism is, according to Miller et al. (2004: 9), "discriminatory, oppressive or abusive behaviour arising from the belief that disabled people are inferior to others." Over the last two decades there have been both national and international legislation passed by governments that has greatly reduced overt disablism. The elimination of overt disablist attitudes makes the lives of impaired people better, opening up opportunities for work and leisure although some feel there is a long way to go before equity is achieved. As Deal suggests:

> Not all forms of prejudice and discriminatory behaviour, however, are blatant and therefore easily identifiable, as subtle forms of prejudice also exist. Therefore any attempt to tackle prejudice towards disabled people must not only focus on overtly discriminatory behaviour but also recognize subtle forms of prejudice, which can be equally damaging. (Deal 2007: 94)

The disablism that confronts me and those like me on the streets of Atlanta is not a blatant but a subtle form of prejudice. Disablism is hard to detect and the able majority may be unaware that they are being disablist. This is why a phenomenological approach to ethnography – an autoethnography done by social scientists with impairments – can be so enlightening. Using our impaired bodies as a vehicle for research in sporting spaces will increase our understanding of aversive disablism, which can be very difficult to quantify: "Aversive disablists may not be anti-disabled, but rather pro-nondisabled. This theory may hold true for both disabled and nondisabled people, bearing in mind people do not on the whole choose to be disabled, but not choosing to be disabled does not mean the person will automatically be anti-disabled" (Deal 2007: 97).

Employing our impaired bodies "in the world" and recording this experience in a reflexive ethnographic manner will help to establish a sense of the nuances involved in aversive disablism. But we must be careful. Those individuals who do not identify themselves as a product of disablist attitudes, regardless of the severity of their impairment, or who feel they have liberal views toward others with impairments, may be ambivalent to prejudice. Not everyone who is a social researcher with an impairment will be willing, therefore, to engage in an autoethnography of *disability in action*. Some people establish an able identity as a way of passing as "perfect" (see Goffman 1963) in part because they feel acknowledging their impairment will evoke strong feelings of altruism and sympathy. This masquerade (Siebers 2008), or passing as what we are not, can lead to further aversive disablism (Deal 2007) for those who are "out" about their impairment.

I have not always been comfortable with my impaired body. The vignette that opens this chapter draws the reader's attention to my impaired embodiment after setting the stage. Why is this the case? What does it say about my sense of who I am? As the vignette suggests, my movement in sporting spaces is negotiated carefully though not always recorded ethnographically. My body is ever-present and never absent because of my impairment. Whether it is at work or leisure I have lived with the fact that my body is different in part because of how others react to it.

It is also made strange by the fact that I am not living in the body I imagine. In spite of knowing otherwise there are moments on every run where I am incensed by my own body for its lack of normality. The memory of body after I cool down after a run like the one highlighted above when I was a fit and relatively young man or the body that creaks and groans when I go for much less intense runs today. In my mind's eye I am still a silky smooth runner – yet I never was. On the day in Atlanta when I ran by a shop window I saw a rather awkward *spaz*. Spaz is a pejorative term used to describe someone with cerebral palsy because of the high degree of spasticity associated with the condition. The term can be interpreted as abusive if used as a label for people with cerebral palsy. Following Shakespeare (2006), however, I use the term as a badge that has an important part to play in my identity as someone that is not embarrassed by their impairment.

I am lean and fit but someone who fails to meet the aesthetic cultural norms that are firmly rooted in my mind's eye. Yet the smell and feel of running appears so real – I must have been an elite athlete – decked out in clothing provided for me by a sporting company that wanted to be associated with my athletic body. My proprioception is off balance. In other words the my body's proprioceptors, sensory nerve endings in muscles, tendons, and joints that provide a sense of the body's position by responding to stimuli from within the body, were and continue to be at times dysfunctional.

If my ethnographic vignette had featured another body it would still have been sensuous but in a different manner. The movement, the sound and smells would have been distinct to that body or even to my own body on another day. Each sensuous experience is unique in part because the characters will change diachronically even if they themselves appear exactly the same. Being a spaz is an integral part of my identity but there are times when I find myself trying to pass as able. I am increasingly uneasy about this because it is to enter the masquerade and pass off my impaired body for another that may not be better, just different. What is clear is that the manner in which our senses interpret how our bodies react with the social and physical environment might go some way to allowing us to understand the relationship between movement and identity that will possibly enable us to get grips with culturally nuanced interpretations of difference.

## REFERENCES

Abram, David, 1996 The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World. New York: Vintage Books.

Blake, Andrew, 1996 The Body Language: The Meaning of Modern Sport. London: Lawrence and Wishart

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1977 Outline of a Theory of Practice, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1984 Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste. London: Routledge.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1990 The Logic of Practice. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Brooks, Abigail, 2007 Feminist Standpoint Epistemology. *In* Feminist Research Practice: A Primer. Sharlene N. Hesser-Biber and Patricia Leavy, eds. pp. 53–82. London: Sage.

Clifford, James, 1986 Introduction: Partial Truths. *In* Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography. James Clifford and George Marcus, eds. pp. 1–26. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Coffey, Amanda, 1999 The Ethnographic Self: Fieldwork and the Representation of Identity. London: Sage.

Crossley, Nick, 2001 The Social Body: Habit, Identity and Desire. London: Sage.

Davies, Charlotte. A., 1997 Reflexive Ethnography: A Guide to Researching Selves and Others. London: Routledge.

Deal, Mark, 2007 Aversive Disablism: Subtle Prejudice Toward Disabled People. Disability and Society 22(1): 93–107.

DePauw, Karen, 1997 The (In)Visibility of DisAbility: Cultural Contexts and "Sporting Bodies." Quest 49: 416–430.

Ellis, Carolyn and Arthur Bochner, 2000 Autoethnography, Personal Narrative, Reflexivity: Researcher as Subject. *In* Handbook of Qualitative Research. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna. S. Lincoln, eds. pp. 733–768. London: Sage.

Featherstone, Mike, 1991 The Body in Consumer Culture. *In* The Body: Social Process and Cultural Theory. Mike Featherstone, Mike Hepworth, and Bryan S. Turner, eds. pp. 170–196. London: Sage.

Featherstone, Mike, Mike Hepworth and Bryan S. Turner eds., 1991 The Body: Social Process and Cultural Theory. London: Sage.

Foucault, Michel, 1977 Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison. Alan Sheridan, trans. New York: Pantheon Books.

Goffman, Erving, 1963 Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.

Hargreaves, John, 1987 The Body Sport and Power Relations *In* Sport, Leisure and Power Relations. John Horne, David Jary, and Alan Tomlinson, eds. pp. 139–159. Sociological Review Monograph 33. London: Routledge.

Howe, P. David, 2004 Sport, Professionalism and Pain: Ethnographies of Injury and Risk. London: Routledge.

Howe, P. David, 2008 The Cultural Politics of the Paralympic Movement: Through the Anthropological Lens. London: Routledge.

Howe, P. David and Morris, Carol, 2009 An Exploration of the Co-production of Performance Running Bodies and Natures within "Running Taskscapes." *In* Sport and the Environment. Theme Issue. Journal for Sport and Social Issues 33(3): 308–330.

Jenkins, R., 1992 Pierre Bourdieu. London: Routledge.

Leder, Drew, 1990 The Absent Body. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lock, Margaret, 1993 Cultivating the Body: Anthropology and Epistemologies of Bodily Practice and Knowledge. Annual Review of Anthropology 22: 133–155.

Markula, Pirkko and Richard Pringle, 2006 Foucault, Sport and Exercise: Power, Knowledge and Transforming the Self. London: Routledge.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 1962 Phenomenology of Perception. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 1965 The Structure of Behaviour, London: Methuen.

Miller, Paul, Sophia Parker and Sarah Gillinson, 2004 Disablism: How to Tackle the Last Prejudice. London: Demos.

Murphy, Robert. F., 1987 The Body Silent. London: Dent.

Rail, Geneviève and Jean Harvey, 1995 Body at Work: Michel Foucault and the Sociology of Sport. Sociology of Sport Journal 12(2): 164–179.

Ryle, Gilbert, 1949 The Concept of the Mind. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
Seymour, Wendy, 1998 Remaking the Body: Rehabilitation and Change. London: Routledge.
Shakespeare, Tom, 2006 Disability Rights and Wrongs. London: Routledge.
Shilling, Chris, 2003 The Body and Social Theory. 2nd edition. London: Sage.
Siebers, Tobin, 2008 Disability Theory. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
Sparkes, Andrew C., 2002 Telling Tales in Sport and Physical Activity: A Qualitative Journey. Leeds: Human Kinetics.
Thomas, Carol, 1999 Female Forms: Experiencing and Understanding Disability. Buckingham: Open University Press.
Turner, Bryan S, 1996 The Body and Society. 2nd Edition. London: Sage.
Wacquant, Loic J. D., 2004 Body and Soul: Notebooks of an Apprentice Boxer. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Wendall, Susan, 1996 The Rejected Body: Feminist Philosophical Reflection on Disability. London: Routledge.

CHAPTER 16

# KINSHIP
## *Bodily Betrayal: Love and Anger in the Time of Epigenetics*

*Emily Yates-Doerr*

> "We have then always to be prepared to speak of production and reproduction, rather than of reproduction alone. Even when we have given full weight to all that can be reasonably described as replication, in cultural as in more general social activities, and when we have acknowledged the systematic reproduction of certain deep forms, we have still to insist that social orders and cultural orders must be seen as actively made: actively and continuously, or they may quite quickly break down."
>
> Raymond Williams (1982)

Studies of kinship have been central to anthropology since its inception, whether in the work of structural-functionalist anthropologists focused on systems of descent, forms of marriage, and rules of post-marital residence as the building blocks of social structure, structuralists concerned with exchange, reciprocity, and alliances among unilineal descent groups, or interpretive anthropologists focused on symbols and systems of meaning. With the advent of feminist anthropology in the 1970s, studies of kinship were revolutionized: attention turned to understanding kinship as a system of power, which produces and sustains inequalities. Essential to this shift was a denaturalizing of kinship and a decoupling of the biological and the social, which opened understandings of how ethnicity, class, gender and other forms of difference shape

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

local experiences and representations of kinship, marriage, and household (Peletz 1995: 362; see also Schneider 1968).

This decoupling of biological and social reproduction was, however, soon complicated by burgeoning studies of assisted reproductive technologies (ARTs). While Marilyn Strathern pointed to ARTs as a challenge to the naturalization of the "facts of life" – having sex, transmitting genes, and giving birth (1992: 5) – recent work on ARTs, which builds upon the classic insights of feminist anthropologists such as Rayna Rapp (1978), Gail Rubin (1975), and Jane Collier and Sylvia Yanagisako (1987), has reinforced the constructed "nature" of kinship while at the same time uniting ontological domains such as "the biological" and "the social," which were often held apart in early feminist analyses (see Edholm et al. 1978). The advent of technologies such as artificial insemination or surrogacy has separated the egg, the womb, and the mother, thereby blurring divisions between genetics and labor and consequently transforming understandings of parenthood itself (e.g. Franklin and Roberts 2006; Inhorn and Birenbaum-Carmeli 2008; Thompson 2005).

Much of this work on ARTs, however, has focused on conception and pregnancy, circumscribing "assisted reproduction" within the realms of genetic insemination and fetal development. I suggest that assisted reproduction must be understood more broadly in a world where ideas about health and nutrition are increasingly linked to epigenetic research that suggests that genetics are shaped not in a moment of conception, but over the course of one's life. While genetic research has shed new light on why one may be predisposed to certain health disorders, epigenetic studies stress that food consumption throughout one's lifespan affects physiological development and disease susceptibility not merely for an individual, but also for her progeny and theirs. As epigenetic research infiltrates local discourses in many areas of the world, women – who continue to be primarily responsible for cooking for and feeding their families – are sent a message that goes beyond "you are what you eat." It implies that your children, and even your grandchildren, will be what you eat as well. To ensure "healthy outcomes" for themselves and their families, women are now encouraged to adopt "modern" styles of food preparation, recent technologies through which to evaluate food (and health), and new ways of relating to their bodies. These changes affect understandings of heredity and kinship, as the biological reproduction of one's genealogy is no longer confined to sexual intercourse – or even to the wide range of "assisted" technologies in which gametes might meet. Instead, every time a woman eats, and every time a woman feeds another, she engages in an act of biological reproduction with far-reaching consequences. During research conducted in the highlands of Guatemala, I saw that as these technologies altered women's traditional mode of kinship reproduction, the embodied response often took the form of anger, illustrated in Mama Carla's story below.[1]

## Mama Carla's Anger

"I am angry," Mama Carla first told me one day when we were lingering at the lunch table having finished eating, but not yet wanting to turn to the stack of dishes and other afternoon chores that awaited us. I had known her for several months. First we cooked together. Then I moved into her house, and after two months I had already lived with her longer than most of my homestay families. The meal we had just eaten

was delicious – *chiles rellenos*, made with peppers that had been individually peeled, battered, stuffed with a filling of chicken and beef among various vegetables, and covered in a slowly simmered sauce. "Served with love," Carla had said when setting them in front of us. She didn't seem to be angry, and at first I thought I had misunderstood. But she repeated herself, with quiet resolve, "I am angry." Now sure that I had heard correctly, I asked her to explain. At first she said nothing. Then, she whispered, "This diabetes has turned me angry."

Carla had told me before that her family often forgot she had diabetes. Given how active she was – an energetic housewife and enthusiastic cook – it was easy for me to also forget that Carla was in any way ill. That day in the kitchen, however, she reminded me that while her diabetes might not have been visible, it nonetheless haunted her. She told me that for years before she received her diagnosis she had known something wasn't right. She couldn't think clearly at times, would unpredictably feel deep pain in her knees, and her thirst and appetite were irregular and often felt out of her control:

> And then they took my blood and suddenly, in an instant, I had an explanation, and medication, and rules. "Forever," they said when I asked how long I had to take the medication they gave me. "You will always have to take this medicine. And you must try to lose weight. You must also be careful to feed your family well. They could get this too," they said. I started to feel very angry that day. I am still angry.

I was surprised, sitting across the table from Mama Carla, to hear her speak of instantaneous change brought on by this diagnosis. I knew that she often didn't take her medicine, which she kept tucked away in her kitchen in one of the tins used for spices. It was expensive, and she did not use it prophylactically, but as an antidote to pain or tremors in her heart. I also knew that she frequently awoke with a weakness in her limbs – several times I found her sitting at her kitchen table in the quiet of the early morning, in too much discomfort to sleep. Diabetes may have given her the certainty of a diagnosis, but she still lived with deep and lingering uncertainties about whether the pains she felt were severe enough to take to a doctor, or whether she was strong enough to wait until they passed. I dutifully wrote about the conversation in my field notes, but I didn't realize until much later that what diabetes took from her – and the anger it left her with – was only tangentially connected to her physical pain.

## Kinship and Reproduction

How do we make sense of Mama Carla's anger, and of the anger of many other women I encountered during my fieldwork? While living in Xela, Guatemala, I studied techniques of body weight management in the context of what scientists call "the nutrition transition" – a worldwide transition occurring in the shadow of urbanization as processed foods replace staple foods, and lifestyles and bodies transform in response (Caballero and Popkin 2002). In this chapter, I draw attention to the new culinary obligations that nutritional discourses tied to these global changes have placed on women such as Mama Carla. I suggest that as these women reform their existing expertise to accommodate quantitative technologies of health, their anger must be understood within changing idioms of kinship and reproduction.

In Guatemala – as in many countries in the world – widespread migration from rural communities to urban centers has been accompanied by a series of chronic illnesses dubbed by the public health community as "diseases of modernity." Due, in part, to international trade agreements that have transformed the region's food economy, Xela has seen rising rates of diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, and a range of other illnesses correlated to dietary practice (Groeneveld et al. 2007). New understandings of health and well-being, and the introduction of technologies aimed at changing illness profiles, have come into conflict with the longstanding domain of women's culinary activities. Food preparation and the feeding of their families have long been a source of women's pleasure and power. But now, as concerns about calories, body-mass index (BMI), and triglycerides replace the slowly cultivated experiences and understandings of taste, smell, and touch that were the traditional basis of women's culinary expertise, cooking and feeding produce deep unhappiness, frustration, and anger for a generation of women who have devoted their lives to their homes and families. Metabolic illnesses have come to recast as potentially harmful the practices these women have long believed to be of value, calling into question their gendered role as family caretaker, and their skills of mothering.

After outlining the traditional links between women and food in Guatemala, I return to Mama Carla to explore how cooking and feeding today are not just creative, but procreative projects and how they are being altered and undermined in this time of epigenetics. I show that epidemiological transformations and transitions in the global food economy have brought with them ontological changes in how women understand their bodies and motherhood, and thus the very nature of kinship.

## From "Food is Love" To "Food is Health"

For centuries, if not longer, Guatemalan women have been responsible for central aspects of food production – from cultivation and harvest, to selling produce in markets, to boiling and grinding corn into *masa* with which to prepare tortillas. Anthropologist Lois Paul's descriptions of "the hearth" in the Zutuhil village of San Pedro in the 1940s provides a sense of the gendered divisions of labor in the region's recent history. She writes:

> The hearth and its fire are the heart and shrine of woman's domain and must be treated with special care… One of the three stones is known as the grandmother stone, and it is a sin even to move this sacred stone. The umbilical cord of a baby girl should be placed under the grandmother stone so that the girl will stay at home when she is grown. A boy's umbilical cord is hung in a granary so that he will work well in the fields (Paul 1974: 284).

During my time in Xela, men snickered at my questions about cooking, telling me this was not their domain. In schools today, when teachers give instruction on "home economics," they still first send the boys out of the classroom.

The traditional link between women and culinary caretaking has been reinforced by the proliferation of campaigns advertising convenience foods throughout Guatemala in the last few decades. Instant foods (consommé soup packages, sandwich bread,

yogurt, etc.) might have decreased the responsibility women have to feed their families, requiring less skill than foods cooked slowly and allowing anyone to prepare them. But ads for processed foods almost exclusively portray women in traditional gender roles, thus further cementing an image of women as domestic attendants. And, in the homes where I lived, "convenience foods" such as pasta, rice, or white bread did not ease the obligations entailed in cooking, but were incorporated into and added onto already existing techniques of meal-preparation. As historian Katherine Parkin explains, more than a century of ads for food have held "women responsible for their family's health, status, and satisfaction because they claimed that, in the hands of women, 'food is love'" (Parkin 2006: 11). While her research was based on ads developed for 20th-century U.S. markets – for example a 1957 ad stating "Mother Never Ran Out of Kellogg's Corn Flakes," or a 1939 ad for Kraft Macaroni-and-Cheese where a businessman stated to his smiling wife, "Just starting dinner now? I'm hungry!" – food companies (including Kellogg's and Kraft) employ many of these same strategies in Guatemalan ads today.

Such ads coincide with a common sentiment expressed by both men and women in Xela that women are now responsible not just for the well-being, but the *dietary health* of their families. I conducted much of my fieldwork in the nutrition clinic of Xela's public hospital; when men arrived without their wives or daughters, the nutritionists would gently chastise them for not bringing the person in their household who cooked. When men were accompanied by family members, questions about their eating habits were addressed, often exclusively, to women. When it comes to the dietary health of their families, women are assigned responsibility in a way in which men clearly are not. An intimate gendered division of labor shadows the dining table, and the health clinic, as well.

The centrality of culinary caretaking in women's lives is not lessened by contemporary discourses of chronic illnesses and epigenetics. But these discourses have changed the ways in which food is valued. As food becomes assessed not through immediate registers of pleasure and taste but through abstract nutritional standards, women who have traditionally reproduced themselves through connectedness and intimacy must now look to discourses of "health" to express love. Herein lies a paradox: although epigenetic views of heredity assign to women deep responsibilities for dietary health, at the same time they suggest that these "diseases of modernity" are far beyond their control.

## Lovers of the Home

We can only begin to understand Mama Carla's anger, I suggest, when we consider the changing context within which women's traditional position as food preparer and housewife unfolds today. Like many of the women I lived and worked with, Mama Carla spent her days in line with the Guatemalan term for housewife, *ama de casa* (from *amar*, to love; *de*, of; *casa*, home). As a most dedicated *lover of her home*, she cooked elaborate meals for her husband and four children. Her lunches were almost always a several-course feast, and in a city where leftover beans and tortillas made an adequate dinner, she would instead cook an entirely separate meal – blending and frying whole beans into *frijoles volteados* and scrambling eggs, which she served with fresh

tortillas, homemade salsa, guacamole, and cream. She also rose before sunrise to wash clothes so they would dry in the morning sun, and scrubbed the piles of dishes that had accumulated during the day until well after sunset. Cleaning the rest of her home and shopping for groceries consumed the remainder of the day. After the first time Mama Carla told me she was angry, she began to tell me this more often, always in the calmest, quietest tone. When I told her that she didn't appear to be angry, she would stubbornly add, before changing the subject: "It may not look like it, but I am angry." I never saw any outward signs of this anger. She didn't raise her voice, didn't contradict her husband, and never scolded her children. But in that quiet whisper she would say it to me, "I am angry."

Carla passed most of her time working by herself. Like many in Xela – whose population has risen from roughly 36,000 in 1950 to more than 200,000 today – she had moved to the city from the countryside. Her house was on the same block where many of her in-laws lived, but she was not as close with them as they were with each other. "You and I get along so well because we're both outsiders," she told me several times. Her home was also separated from that of her in-laws, who lived in adjacent homes that shared a common kitchen. Her husband, Miguel, had studied in university to be an architect. Though he now worked (when he could find work) as a construction site manager, several years earlier he had remodeled their home, basing the design upon his vision of "the modern style" (*el estilo moderno*). He had segmented several of the larger communal spaces – the courtyard, for example – into smaller, private rooms. This meant that each of the children technically had their own bedroom (though in practice, the younger girls still shared a room and often slept in their parents' bed), and that they also had a room to offer to me. This "modern style" also meant that instead of an open kitchen, Carla cooked in a relatively secluded corner of the house. She was very proud of her kitchen, but also spoke of being lonely. She told me that she had learned to cook surrounded by her mother, sisters, and friends through patient observation and experience. She said her mother had taught her to make tortillas by holding her hands, so they could form the dough together. "There was no such thing as a mistake and there was nothing that couldn't be readjusted," she told me. This was in sharp contrast to the "healthy cooking class" she attended while I lived with her, which provided her detailed recipes with carefully measured instructions: 2 tablespoons canola oil, 8 oz chicken breast, ¼ cup nonfat yogurt, 1 package of Splenda. She threw the recipes away when she brought them home, since she had neither scale, nor measuring cups, nor money for Splenda. Cooking, for Carla, was not an experience in exactitude or accuracy but instead a practice in forming relationships. Every once in a while she would tell me that she would have liked to be able to run a restaurant out of her home, to serve groups of people. But she always laughed when she said this, explaining that she could never do this because she did not like to charge people for food.

Isolation was a complaint I heard from many women in Xela. Whereas they had stayed at home as children to help their mothers, their own daughters now largely attended school during the days, and spent much of their evenings doing homework. Kitchens and the activities surrounding cooking were also once shared by many, and in some of the homes where I lived, sisters, sisters-in-laws, daughters, and mothers still divided cooking duties among them. But newly built homes – and given Xela's expanding population, there were many – and those such as Carla's that had been

remodeled included a "modern kitchen" that presented women with the double-edged sword of solitude – the space was theirs, but so too was the obligation of meal preparation in isolation.

While Mama Carla cooked, she would talk with me about her frustrations. Money was high on her list. She and Miguel kept their finances separate; he gave her an allowance for the family's groceries, but if she wanted more money than she could make from selling food door-to-door – which she did roughly once a week – she had to go to him, and she referred to him several times as stingy [*tacaño*]. Carla was also burdened by the problems of her two older children, from a separate marriage. Her eldest daughter had accumulated thousands of *quetzales* of debt. Her only son had just had his second child – with a different woman than his first, born when he was fifteen – and, having just been fired, was unable to support himself let alone his wife and newborn. There was also her health, a persistent worry. Carla needed relatively expensive pills for her diabetes, which meant going to her husband for money, and even when he acquiesced, she rationed her pills to make them last longer. I knew she was bothered by her heart – both by the pain she felt there, and by the fear of what the pain might mean. And then there was the health of her family. "He's getting too skinny," an uncle had said to Carla while looking at Miguel one day over dinner. Carla had told me that week that she was concerned that Miguel wasn't eating enough. He had come down with a severe flu earlier in the year, and did indeed look gaunt. Whereas Carla wanted her husband to "fatten-up" (*engordarse*), she worried that her cooking was making her eldest daughter Lizbet overweight (*con sobrepeso*). Lizbet, who at 25 was still unmarried, had recently been diagnosed as prediabetic. Carla took responsibility for this, and tried to accommodate a range of needs in the meals she made.

I knew Mama Carla had many worries. But I never saw her visibly act on the anger she confessed to me. And though she felt she had barely enough money to get by, those seated at her table were always fed with incredible generosity – her husband, her children, the local pastor, a teacher from their daughter's school, an out of town friend, and myself. Once, after friends of her son had come to dinner and eaten helping after helping, requesting more until all was gone, I asked if it made her angry to see them devour her food as they had. She seemed startled by my question. "No, this is the way I like it. It's the way my mother did it too. People do not go hungry in my house," she responded. There were a few times that she complained about guests offending her in one way or another, but having a large appetite was never rude. She always offered extra, and nearly always had beans on the stove as a backup in case the primary courses she had prepared ran out.

The ability of women in Xela to keep their families full has been greatly influenced by international regulations such as the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), which took effect in Guatemala in 2006. CAFTA extended the reduction in tariffs first promulgated with the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement in the mid 1990s, resulting in the increased availability in Guatemalan marketplaces of pork, poultry, soybean meal and yellow corn, as well as highly processed foods such as potato chips, sandwich cookies, frozen French fries, and prepackaged Kraft cheese (Hawkes and Thow 2008:352). This process of "trade liberalization" has also encouraged the proliferation of supermarkets, such as Wal-Mart, Ahold, La Fragua, and Carrefour, whose presence more than doubled in the 1990s (Asfaw 2009). While people could remember just one grocery store in Xela a generation ago, numerous

Wal-Mart subsidiaries now spread throughout the city. The women I lived with did not like shopping at these stores, and always bought their produce in the busy outdoor markets where they had relationships with vendors. But staple commodities such as sugar, oil, rice, pasta, cereal, and even beans and corn-flour were much cheaper in the supermarkets, and they counted on these goods to fill the stomachs of their families in ways that vegetables alone would not. The price of meat – particularly imported chicken, which was sold by neighborhood butchers – had also dropped considerably. Mama Carla complained about the taste of this chicken and went to great lengths to buy *pollo medio criollo* (partially farm raised chicken) from vendors in the hillsides outside the city. Still, given the relative low cost of "factory chicken," the disappearance of vendors who sold locally raised chicken, and the prestige associated with meat consumption, she often simply tried to cover what she called a "taste of chemicals" with sauces and spices.

Many of the themes in Mama Carla's conversations with me reverberated in the stories of other women with whom I lived and worked in Xela. I heard countless stories about the exhaustion and powerlessness women felt in their role as housewives. They felt overworked, but also worried they were expendable. They were lonely, but also felt pulled by those around them in a million directions. They loved their children and their husbands – they were always quick to qualify their complaints with this assertion – but they also grew tired under the weight of their responsibilities. And now with the recognition of their own illnesses, these demands often conflicted with the advice they have been given by their doctors. As one patient diagnosed with obesity at the public hospital told me when I visited her at home, "I spend so much time managing what everyone around me eats to keep them healthy that I have no energy left to care also for myself." After three visits, which took place over three months, she still had not lost any weight and decided not to make a follow-up appointment. When I later asked her why, she said she had decided that the problem with her weight had nothing to do with the food she ate, but with the life she led.[2]

## Sex and Food

The anger felt by Mama Carla and other women with whom I spent time was related not only to their experiences of isolation, the stress of work, or precarious financial circumstances, but also to deep transformations occurring in their reproductive practices. Anthropologists have long connected the social status of women to sexual reproduction, where virginity for unmarried women and monogamy for married women were of utmost importance to ensure that their children would inherit their class privileges. In Guatemala, marriage and having children are activities tightly controlled by men, the church, and the legal system, which historians suggest was established, as in many places in the world, so that a husband's children would inherit his property. Laurel Bossen refers to Guatemalan Civil Law 106 which emphasizes the significance of women's role in child care: "[w]ith the birth of the first child, the woman must understand that her mission is in the home, and except for very special circumstances she must not neglect her children" (Bossen cited in Smith 1995: 736). This law remained in effect until the late 1990s. Although many people suggest that sexual mores in Catholic Guatemala are less restrictive today than in generations past,

rules of marriage and sexual conduct continue to be closely tied to ideas of social legitimacy within the family, the community, and the nation-state. Women have, however, developed ways of getting around this control, especially with regard to birth control and abortion practices. They have also sought technologies other than sexual intercourse resulting in genetic / "blood" progeny to (re)produce their status and power.

Sexuality and eating, in Guatemala as elsewhere, are deeply enmeshed, both offering means of " 'placing' oneself in relation to others," (Goody 1982: 2; see also Meigs 1984; Popenoe 2004). Given the tight restrictions and regulations placed on sexual reproduction, Guatemalan women have also long turned to culinary forms of reproduction as a mode of asserting their social value. At the same time, however, sexual intercourse and feeding / eating are not always directly analogous: for example, while the meaning of sexuality is often over-determined by sexual intercourse, conjuring a vocabulary of penetration, dominance, seduction, resistance, and submission, feeding and eating entail expressions of intimacy, affection, and nurturance. Many – not all, but many – of the women I lived with who were deeply invested in the intimate, sensual, compassionate practices of feeding, rarely said anything about sex. When it came to cooking and eating, however, they had much to share.

The "social intercourse" (Sutton 2001; Weismantel 2001) which occurs in feeding and eating produces – and reproduces – relations of affinity that parallel, but are not subsumed by, the practices of sexual intercourse. It is telling that a synonym to the word *rica* – a Spanish way of describing food as delicious – is *fértil,* or fertile. Fertility, as understood by the women with whom I lived, was tied not only to the process of sexual reproduction, but also to the ways that they affected the bodies of others through their daily culinary activities. It was a custom after Carla had piled her guests' plates high with beans, rice, cream, guacamole, salsa, cheese, and the main dish she had prepared, and after Miguel had said the prayer of grace, for the family to make a welcome speech, in which they emphasized to those at the table: "You are a part of our family." There was no analogy or metaphor at work – guests in this moment were not *like* or *similar to* family. In other words, there was no sense of "fictive kinship" in this household – a term with roots in biological determinism, which positions some kinship to be true, but others as mere fiction. Kinship was kinship; eating together created it and the food prepared by Mama Carla was the foundation for the formation of these relationships (see also Carsten 1997).

Yet much of this was called into question with her diagnosis of diabetes. The nagging presence of her own illness coupled with concern about her daughter's prediabetic diagnosis took away the certainty she had about the aptitude of her labor. The ambiguity that she felt about what was happening within her body affected her long-held belief in the importance of the pleasures of taste, satiety, and satisfaction. "In an instant" – to use her words – diabetes recast experiences she had long believed to be of value as potentially harmful. The logic of nutritional epigenetics accompanying diabetes also replaced the value of producing relationships through meals with the value of long-term reproductive health. With this diagnosis, a range of new reproductive technologies entered the realm of culinary values in which Mama Carla was raised. As these technologies became increasingly abundant in her life, her primary domain of knowledge and expertise became obfuscated, and her role in her family and community became transformed.

## New Reproductive Technologies and Epigenetics

With discourses of metabolic health requiring the introduction of new technologies for cooking and feeding, the traditional pathways for women's reproduction of kin have been radically reordered. These technologies situate dietary well being not through tastes and intimacies, but through quantitative measures such as weight, blood sugar, caloric energy, centimeters of abdominal fat, and grams of carbohydrates or proteins. Such technologies also operate through calculations unfamiliar to women – often their young daughters know more about how to use these metrics than they do. In Mama Carla's case, she was learning to use the tape measure from her sewing kit to obtain the centimeter size of her abdominal fat and arm circumference, and to then compare these numbers against population norms that purported to tell her if her body was healthy. In the market, children standing next to scales would read her weight; back at home, we used my computer's calculator to determine her BMI, and to find out where she was situated with respect to an international norm. At her doctor's office, there were the sphygmomanometer and stethoscope for blood pressure, and a blood sugar machine that would take a pinprick of blood to reveal her glucose levels in only a few minutes. Her doctor would send her to a separate laboratory to give a blood sample that produced numbers representing levels of cholesterol and triglycerides.

And then there was a range of technologies derived from equipment in far-away laboratories: the calorie, the serving size or portion, the recommended daily allowance of vitamins, minerals, fats, and carbohydrates. Carla had learned to cook by relying upon skills developed through relationships with her grandmother, her mother, her aunts, and other kin. In contrast, these new technologies depended not on women's existing training and skills, but on numbers, norms, mathematical averages and fixed quantities. At the same time, these technologies also recast women's own bodies as vulnerable, and in need of external oversight and vigilant maintenance. The local paper, *El Quetzalteco*, regularly ran articles connecting the perils of obesity with new scientific and technological interventions. For example, an article on polycystic ovary disease warned that fat in the diet could "alter the ovaries," and included the following three pieces of advice, each illustrated by a picture:

1) "control your weight" was accompanied by an apple wrapped with a measuring tape;
2) "consult a doctor" was accompanied by a doctor in a white lab coat with a stethoscope and clipboard; and
3) "do exercise" was accompanied by a tall, thin woman exercising on an indoor rowing machine.

These mathematical formulas, tables of standards and cut-off points, and averaged dietary requirements are replacing women's knowledge about the indeterminate modalities of the senses and undercutting the expertise they have about their own bodies. Illness for women in Xela was once linked to a feeling of sickness; the health spoken of today, however, often does not refer to a sensation felt within the body, but a calculated probability. No longer conceived in opposition to the feeling of disease (i.e. pain, nausea, exhaustion), health is seen as a variable to be maximized, demanding

both the prevention of future illness as well as the possibility of future prosperity resulting from increased work potential. The presence of illness is thus no longer contingent upon one's awareness of their own body, but upon a doctor's interpretations and lab results – sources outside one's body or self. Pain, nausea, and fatigue are certainly present in many metabolic illnesses, but this class of illness is also unusual because, in one doctor's words: "you can be sick, without feeling sick." Heart disease, for example, is often described as a "silent killer," hidden in a body that does not feel its dormant presence. An article in the health section of the local newspaper showed a photograph of a woman in indigenous dress, her arm extended toward a woman wearing a white uniform, who was taking her blood pressure. The caption read: "People must be evaluated constantly, in order to know the state of their health and to best care for themselves."

What is significant here is that at the precise moment when women's embodied knowledge is being called into question and their culinary expertise undercut by new reproductive technologies, discourses of epigenetics have raised the stakes of culinary reproduction. A major longitudinal study carried out in Guatemala by the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama (INCAP), which began in the 1960s and is ongoing through follow-up studies today, has helped to lay the groundwork for the idea that "food conditions early in life, *in utero* or early post-natal life, affect patterns of gene expression and thus the way the body works for a lifetime, and perhaps beyond" (Landecker 2010: 21). While people I worked with in Xela were largely unfamiliar with the scientific technicalities of epigenetics – that is, the idea that food "provides a molecular signal that may last over generations" and "shapes the conditions of its own reception in the future" (Landecker 2010: 21) – Guatemalan media sources have been quick to translate the implications of this research into everyday warnings about the responsibilities of motherhood. The *Prensa Libre* – with one of the largest circulations in the country – was filled with headlines such as "Prevention of Obesity Begins during Pregnancy" (*Prevención de la obesidad comienza desde el embarazo*), or "The Mother's Obesity or Excess Weight Influences the Weight of Her Children" (*La obesidad o sobrepeso de la madre influye en el peso de sus hijos*), or "Get Exercise, Mom!" (*¡Haz ejercicio, mama!*).

Such messages replace traditional connections between women's role in nourishing their families with discourses about the importance of making individual food choices. Focus is thus shifted from the social embeddedness of cooking and feeding and women's role in producing intimacy and cementing relationships to how one's practices of dietary health will impact the future. At one of the health centers I visited an employee had taped up a newspaper article with the headline, "Nutrition for the Future." "There is an abundance of excuses for eating poorly," the article began. "But," it went on to suggest, "there is one good reason for caring for nutrition: the quality of life in the future, when you pay for what you did (or didn't do) in your youth." When counseling patients about dieting, local nutritionists would often tell them that dietary changes would yield a future payback. "It might seem expensive, but imagine the long term savings," or "It costs more but it's worth it," were common statements used to promote certain foods over others. This future orientation or focus on "potentiality" is increasingly understood through the metrics of alternative reproductive technologies. Potentiality is both determined through a numeric scale (BMI, for example), and transformed into indices that aim to predicatively measure future possibilities in terms

of "human capital," defined as "increased height and fat-free mass, increased work capacity, and improved intellectual performance." INCAP reported that its "longitudinal study demonstrates that nutritional intervention in the first months of life can change the situation of poor or extremely poor households, generation after generation. Physical growth and mental development depend on a complete diet during the first years of life" (Marroquín Cabrera 2009). The explanation that human capital would be expanded with proper nutrition made its way into local news, and consequently into the lives of the women I spent time with in this way: "Invest in human child capital" (*Hay que invertir en capital humano infantil*). "Good nutritional health has changed lives," was the title of a special issue of the Sunday *Prensa Libre* from April, 2009.

The findings of the INCAP study not only resulted in injunctions to force women to eat better and focus on the future consequences of their dietary choices and behaviors but also shaped national food policies. Following INCAP's early reports that gestation and the first three years of life marked a critical window on later health outcomes, the Guatemalan national government began a concerted effort to direct attention toward the nutrition of pregnant and lactating women, and toward children under the age of three. Today, government-funded health outreach programs are charged with delivering the supplement *Vitacereal* to rural communities. Vitacereal is a vitamin-fortified maize developed by the World Food Program, manufactured in Guatemala, and delivered to outreach programs in bulk via boxes marked "from Spain." A program I worked with gave every pregnant or lactating woman in the communities it served three bags of Vitacereal each month, as well as three bags for each child under three years of age. The bags were delivered with a "cooking class" (*clase de cocina*), showing women how to add boiling, purified water to dissolve the powdered formula, which educators explained held concentrated proteins, fats, and carbohydrates, as well as vitamins and minerals that would make them healthy. In the months of classes I sat in on, the main comment the educators offered about taste was to clarify that it didn't "taste bad." These health programs also monitored women and children their monthly "measurements" (*medidas*), which were linked to a range of outcomes correlated with traditional understandings of health (i.e. lifespan and incidence of disease). But the educators also linked food and body measurements to future intellectual functioning, school achievement, work capacity, and income and wealth (Ramirez-Zea et al. 2010: 399). In contrast to those working in urban centers, few people treated were determined to be *over*weight, and we rarely treated someone diagnosed with diabetes, hypertension, etc. But health educators had learned that rural malnutrition could contribute to the onset of metabolic illnesses later in life, and would emphasize making "healthy" food choices. In both urban and rural nutrition classes, educators would say: "You need to eat a variety of foods or your family will get sick." On several occasions I heard educators make the promise: "If *you* eat well, your family will be healthy."

These food policies, injunctions, and the barrage of probability calculations that predict future outcomes which confront Xela women today do not simply direct women's attention toward the future, but cultivate a new awareness of the self as situated in a linear and progressive temporality. This is a highly gendered self, but it one disengaged from prior networks of female kin through which embodied practices of shopping, cooking, and caretaking were kinesthetically learned. It is telling that INCAP's scientists summarized the results of the longitudinal study as follows:

"Nutritional improvements in the critical period of gestation and the first three years of life ultimately produce adolescents with a greater *potential* for leading healthy, productive lives" (Martorell et al. 1995: 1034S, italics mine). This potentiality is increasingly understood through the metrics of alternative reproductive technologies dependent upon quantitative abstractions and not the immediate pleasures of eating. As a result, at the moment in which nutritional epigenetics presents women with heightened responsibility for the future health of their kin, so too does it undermine their existing culinary knowledge and skills.

## Bodily Betrayal

In this chapter I have suggested that the anger Mama Carla spoke of is linked to the challenge that diabetes presented to her reproductive potential, in its broadest sense. What the diagnosis of a metabolic illness took from women whose lives centered on their kitchens was more than physical; it took away their sense of culinary expertise and consequently their feeling of security about their place within their families and communities. When women learned that their well-being, and that of their kin, had been compromised by the food they prepared, it called into question both their ability to care for those around them and their capacity for reproduction in a most literal sense: it was through food and feeding that they actively and continuously formed the bodies of others. Moreover, at the same time that their role in their families was undermined, a discourse of epigenetics heightened the toll of this "infertility," threatening consequences that would be borne by their kin, generation upon generation. While illness and the marginalization of women is nothing new to Guatemala, metabolic illnesses have placed new burdens on women, and women themselves see their bodies as embodying a particularly modern form of violence. This violence destabilizes their expertise in a key domain of their authority – cooking and feeding – while also taking place, not only in the global processes happening around them, but within their own bodies and the bodies of those they love and nurture.

In one sense, epigenetic theories have potential for facilitating public recognition about something anthropologists have seen for decades: bodies, and the cultural technologies and artifacts around which they coalesce, are not just individually performed, but are built up over time in individuals, families, and communities. But epigenetics as it is popularly understood in Guatemala (and elsewhere) focuses not upon the social world, but on the bodies and choices of individual women, and the hostile or benign forces that enter the body from an external environment. It is coupled with metrics of (human) capital that overlay a series of calculations and quantitative standards upon dietary practice in a way that is unable to assess the knowledge held by women like Mama Carla in terms that are meaningful to them. It also comes with a promise: "If you eat well, your family will be healthy." While this appears to be straightforward advice, perhaps even well-intentioned, it saddles people – overwhelmingly women – with the impossible responsibility for preventing dietary illnesses in themselves and in others. It ignores that bodies can betray us.

Biological reproduction was once primarily associated with marriage and sex – and thought to occur over the duration of insemination and gestation. Today, following

the logic of global discourses about nutritional epigenetics, the biological reproduction in which women are engaged happens every day over *los tres tiempos* (the three main meals of the day), seven days a week, with no end in sight. In every act of eating, and every act of feeding, women participate in a negotiation in which their lineage is at stake; given that the threat of metabolic illness looms large before them, the stakes of this negotiation are high. Not only do the new technologies accompanying metabolic illnesses affect the kinship systems in which women are embedded, but by linking food consumption, long-term health, and reproductive potential, the very notion of kinship – and the pathways of its reproduction – is transformed. While existing anthropological analyses of ARTs have effectively conflated biological and social reproduction, contemporary global discourses of epigenetics require that we now extend our understanding of "reproductive technologies" to encompass the culinary, dietary, and dieting practices in which women and men participate. This, in turn, requires that we return to kinship studies with renewed interest in the socio-material construction of a form of heredity that is "actively and continuously" made in the body.

## NOTE

1 This chapter is based on research undertaken between January 2008 and April 2009, which was supported by a Wenner-Gren research grant and a Fulbright Hays dissertation research award. Pre-dissertation support from an SSRC IDRF fellowship, a Tinker grant, and the Doris M. Ohlsen Award for Latin American Scholarship allowed me to develop this project in the summers of 2006–7. I offer many thanks to Fran Mascia-Lees, whose editing support helped to shape this chapter, and to Emily Martin, Thomas Abercrombie, Rayna Rapp, and Emily McDonald, who provided comments on an earlier draft. My deepest gratitude goes to the women who fed and cared for me in Xela.

2 It is revealing that the word used in Guatemala to describe a strong craving for food (one dissociated from a perceived physiological hunger) – *ansiedad* – is also used to describe the anxiety associated with a stressful life. As such, to experience ansiedad means both to lose control of appetite and to feel anxious.

## REFERENCES

Asfaw, Abay, 2009 Does Consumption of Processed Foods Explain Disparities in the Body Weight of Individuals? The Case of Guatemala. Health Economics Dec 22: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/hec.1579/pdf

Caballero, Benjamin, and Barry M. Popkin, 2002 The Nutrition Transition: Diet and Disease in the Developing World. Boston: Academic Press.

Carsten, Janet, 1997 The Heat of the Hearth: the Process of Kinship in a Malay Fishing Community. New York: Oxford University Press.

Collier, Jane, and Sylvia Yanagisako, 1987 Introduction. *In* Gender and Kinship: Essays Toward a Unified Analysis. pp. 1–13. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Edholm, Felicity, Olivia Harris and Kate Young, 1978 Conceptualising Women. Critique of Anthropology 3(9–10): 101–130.

Franklin, Sarah and Celia Roberts, 2006 Born and Made: an Ethnography of Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Goody, Jack, 1982 Cooking, Cuisine, and Class: a Study in Comparative Sociology. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Groeneveld, Iris F., Noel W. Solomons and Colleen M. Doak, 2007 Nutritional Status of Urban Schoolchildren of High and Low Socioeconomic Status in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. Pan American Journal of Public Health 22(3): 169–77.

Hawkes, Corinna and Anne Marie Thow, 2008 Implications of the Central America–Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement for the Nutrition Transition in Central America. Rev Panam Salud Publica / Pan American Journal of Public Health 24(5): 345–360.

Inhorn, Marcia C. and Daphna Birenbaum-Carmeli, 2008 Assisted Reproductive Technologies and Culture Change. Annual Review of Anthropology 37(1): 177–196.

Landecker, Hannah, 2010 Food as Exposure: Nutritional Epigenetics and the Molecular Politics of Eating. *In* CSW Update Newsletter: UCLA, http: / / escholarship.org / uc / item / 6j50v781.

Marroquín Cabrera, Marcela, 2009 Una Buena Nutrición Les Cambió La Vida. *In* Prensa Libre. pp. 2–3. Guatemala City.

Martorell, Reynaldo, Jean-Pierre Habicht, and Juan A. Rivera, 1995 History and Design of the INCAP Longitudinal Study (1969–77) and its Follow-Up (1988–89). Journal of Nutrition 125(4 Suppl): 1027S–1041.

Meigs, Anna S., 1984 Food, Sex, and Pollution: a New Guinea Religion. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Parkin, Katherine J., 2006 Food is Love: Food Advertising and Gender Roles in Modern America. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Paul, Lois, 1974 The Mastery of Work and the Mystery of Sex in a Guatemalan Village. *In* Woman, Culture, and Society. M.Z. Rosaldo, L. Lamphere, and J. Bamberger, eds. pp. 281–299. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Peletz, Michael G., 1995 Kinship Studies in Late Twentieth-Century Anthropology. Annual Review of Anthropology 24(1): 343–372.

Popenoe, Rebecca, 2004 Feeding Desire: Fatness, Beauty, and Sexuality Among a Saharan People. New York: Routledge.

Ramirez-Zea, Manuel, Paul Melgar and Juan A. Rivera, 2010 INCAP Oriente Longitudinal Study: 40 Years of History and Legacy. Journal of Nutrition 140(2): 397–401.

Rapp, Rayna, 1978 Editorial: The Search for Origins: Unraveling the Threads of Gender Hierarchy. Critique of Anthropology 3(9–10): 3–24.

Rubin, Gayle, 1975 The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex. *In* Toward an Anthropology of Women. R.R. Reiter, ed. pp. 157–210. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Schneider, David Murray, 1968 American Kinship: a Cultural Account. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.

Smith, Carol A., 1995 Race–Class–Gender Ideology in Guatemala: Modern and Anti-Modern Forms. Comparative Studies in Society and History 37(4): 723–749.

Strathern, Marilyn, 1992 Reproducing the Future : Essays on Anthropology, Kinship, and the New Reproductive Technologies. New York: Routledge.

Sutton, David E., 2001 Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory. New York: Berg

Thompson, Charis, 2005 Making Parents: The Ontological Choreography of Reproductive Technologies. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Weismantel, Mary J., 2001 Cholas and Pishtacos: Stories of Race and Sex in the Andes. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Williams, Raymond, 1982 The Sociology of Culture. New York: Schocken Books.

# CHAPTER 17 MASCULINITIES
## *The Male Reproductive Body*

*Emily Wentzell and Marcia C. Inhorn*

### Introduction

In many cultures, the male reproductive body has traditionally been seen as the seat of masculinity. Men must continually prove their manhood by performing acts that cement their social status "as men" in relation to both other men and women (Melhuus 1996). These often entail demonstrations of valorized forms of male reproductive and sexual embodiment, signposting a virility comprised of the conflated abilities to sexually penetrate and procreate (Dudgeon and Inhorn 2003).

This chapter focuses on manhood in Mexico and the Middle East, the sites of our ethnographic research. Our studies of masculinity in the context of sexual and reproductive health care demonstrate both that gender norms and ideals are diverse and changing, and that despite this fluidity, individuals may fear that their status as men is threatened by the physical inability to sexually penetrate or reproduce. For example, a 68-year-old Mexican man facing the amputation of his cancerous penis became depressed and suicidal, saying that affairs with a variety of women had been a definitive aspect of his life, and so "without my penis, I feel that now I'm not a man." Although he was married and had fathered many children, he feared that his future inability to engage in penetrative sex would mark him as unmanly. Along similar lines, many Egyptian men suffering from infertility reported they would feel that, "I am not a man" if this problem became publically known (Inhorn 2003).

These fears reveal "manhood" to be a fragile status achieved partly through public demonstrations of related forms of sexual / reproductive embodiment: having a penis, being able to sexually penetrate, and producing offspring. Thus, men's sexual and reproductive embodiment reproduces much more than the next generation of humans;

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

it reproduces specific ways of being a man. The ways that men embody sexuality and procreation powerfully shape not only whether they are seen by others "as men," but also what kind of men they are thought to be. In cultural contexts where the definition of a "good" man is hotly contested, these forms of embodiment are a key way of living out forms of gendered personhood that have significant social consequences. Sexual and reproductive embodiment is profoundly relational, since sexual penetration and procreation require partners, and may literally create new family members and subsequent relationships. These forms of embodiment not only demonstrate specific kinds of manliness to the world at large, but mediate interpersonal relationships with wives, lovers and children.

Despite negative local stereotypes that sex for men is an instrumental act, meant to show dominance or produce offspring, most of our informants experienced sex and reproduction as embodiments of affective bonds. Relationships mediated by sex, reproduction, and love were thus crucial in shaping individuals' masculine selfhoods. In cases where life or bodily circumstances made sex and reproduction difficult, many men also experienced sexual and reproductive embodiment as a site for struggling against often intertwined structural and biological limitations.

Here, we will examine the ways Mexican and Middle Eastern men used medical technologies in the hopes of producing specific forms of reproductive and sexual embodiment. Using the cases of erectile dysfunction (ED) treatment in Mexico and assisted reproductive technologies (ARTs) in the Middle East, we will show how individuals finding it difficult to have penetrative sex or father children consciously use medical interventions to accomplish a range of ends. These include embodying particular forms of manhood, encouraging particular kinds of social relations, and attempting to overcome the obstacles presented by bodies and structural settings that hamper erectile function or fertility. While these technologies can be used to facilitate the performance of "traditional" masculinities based on patriarchal valorization of penetration and procreation, we found that men more frequently use these interventions to embody masculinities defined by the webs of affective relationships in which sex and reproduction occur.

Our research involved clinic-based ethnographic interviews with hundreds of men experiencing sexual and reproductive health issues. It included over 300 reproductive-aged men, generally ages 25–50, from across the Middle East. They were recruited and interviewed mostly at assisted reproduction clinics in Beirut, Lebanon and in the United Arab Emirates (Inhorn 2004a, b). In Mexico, it included over 250 older men, most aged 50–70, recruited and interviewed in the urology department of a government-run hospital in the city of Cuernavaca (Wentzell 2009).

## Stereotypes and Realities of Mexican and Middle Eastern Masculinities

This research revealed the influences of both local and international discourses about the pitfalls of "traditional" masculinities. Our informants reported deep awareness of the global stereotypes about their cultures' masculinity, including aggressive, patriarchal styles of manliness marked by violence and domineering gender relations. In the case of Mexico, men are thought to be *macho*; to exhibit the desire to dominate

and sexually penetrate all available women (and potentially, lower-status men), to drink, carouse, and fight, and to remain emotionally closed and callous (Amuchástegui and Szasz 2007; Gutmann 1996; McKee Irwin 2003). In the post 9–11 world, the dominant stereotype associated with Middle Eastern men is that of the terrorist – radically religious, violently militaristic, hypermasculine, and exhibiting profound patriarchal control over women (Inhorn and Fakih 2006; Ouzgane 2006). As with the *macho,* the terrorist stereotype is associated with emotional callousness, but this is linked to hyper-religiosity in which Muslim men view nonMuslims as less than human and thus subject to violent attack. Aside from the extreme aspects of each stereotype – sexual in the case of the Mexican macho and violently religious in the case of the Muslim Middle Eastern terrorist – "traditional" masculinities in both sites are associated with forms of male dominance over women. In these notions of dominance, men exert patriarchal control over wives and other females, lack tenderness toward their wives but seek to have children by them, view children, and particularly sons, as a status symbol, and are generally distant yet domineering in the family setting.

The men we spoke with reported wrestling with "traditional" local masculinities. Some decried them as damning stereotypes, while conversely others believed that they were culturally endemic or biologically inescapable. Many understood them as negative tendencies to which they were susceptible, but which they must fight in order to be "good" men and have positive relationships with their wives and family. For example, Middle Eastern participants sometimes spoke of "the Eastern man" or the "Eastern mentality." The "Eastern man" is purportedly polygynous, patriarchal and patrilineal, desiring sons to perpetuate his genealogy and patrimony into the future. Yet, most of these men's lives were far different from these local stereotypes. For instance, when asked if this was their first marriage, most exclaimed, "The first and the last!" some going on to point out that "I love my wife. She is a good person."

Similarly, men in the Mexican study continually referred to *machismo* when asked about their own ways of being men, but then cast it as a damaging discourse about Mexican masculinity, rather than as a valid way to be a man in modern society. They felt that Mexican society was marked by macho instances of bad male behavior, often in terms of their own drinking, infidelity, and emotional closure as youths, which they were now maturing out of. Most participants argued that being macho was an undesirable and unacceptable way to be a man, since times were changing and their nation was modernizing. In today's Mexico, they said, women have the same rights as men, and men should enjoy close, emotional relationships with their wives and children.

In summary, even within an overall social context of ongoing if contested patriarchy, Middle Eastern and Mexican marriages and sexual liaisons are often loving sites that are crucial to defining men's gendered selfhoods. Most Middle Eastern men reported wanting to be married to a woman with whom they could experience ongoing romantic love (Inhorn 2007a). Far from being uncaring, unfeeling, polygynous patriarchs, Middle Eastern men, once married, tend to be deeply invested "family men," demonstrating love, both verbally and physically, to their wives and children. Similarly, although marital fidelity was not a common practice especially among older men, most Mexican study participants felt that their wives and families were crucial to both their success in life and to their very selfhood. Participants commonly stated, "Without my wife, I would be nothing!" and spoke respectfully of their wives' accomplishments and work ethic, particularly in terms of raising their families. Many older

men also reported a shift toward – and younger men a wholesale adoption of – the idea that marriage should be companionate and based on romantic love. Thus, our study participants' sexual and reproductive practices functioned as ways of embodying the sorts of manhood they wished to enact, in the relational setting of close relationships and families.

Our informants thus tended to see sex and procreation as parts of their lives where they could choose between reproducing "traditional" ways of being men, or enacting alternatives. When their health or social settings made it difficult to attain erection or to procreate, they often used medical assistance for erection or fertilization quite thoughtfully, understanding it as a way to put their bodies in line with the embodied masculinities they desired, which in turn would facilitate particular kinds of romantic and family relationships. Thus, their search for medical help was not intended as a simple biomedical fix for broken biology. Instead, it was often a quest for particular forms of embodiment that facilitated affective relationships that would reciprocally define their individual manhood. In the following sections, we discuss the availability and use of ED treatments in Mexico and ARTs in the Middle East, and present ways that men use these medical interventions to be particular kinds of men, by embodying specific forms of sexuality and reproduction.

## Erectile Dysfunction Treatment in Mexico

Since the 1998 introduction of Viagra, Mexico and other world sites have seen a "medicalization of impotence," in which the proliferation of medical fixes for non-normative erections has led to societal re-imaginings of impotence as the biomedical pathology "erectile dysfunction" (ED) (Tiefer 1994). Defined medically as "the persistent inability to achieve or maintain an erection sufficient for satisfactory sexual performance" (Lizza and Rosen 1999), ED treatments have both captured the popular imagination, and been critiqued as an over-medicalization of a complexly bio-social experience. Critics argue that ED treatments promote particular social norms of health, sexuality and masculinity as biological facts, casting "satisfactory" sex as a cross-cultural universal requiring a hard penis, and a "naturally" never-ending desire to sexually penetrate (Loe 2004; Potts et al. 2004).

The idea that less-than-ideal erections can be understood as ED has taken hold in both Mexican medicine and popular culture. A generic version of Viagra is on the list of drugs that government hospitals are required to provide at no cost to eligible patients, and has recently been dispensed free of charge to older men in Mexico City in a government attempt to raise morale among the aged (CNN 2008). Viagra competitors Cialis and Levitra are also readily available without a prescription. These drugs, as well as herbal copycats like "Powersex" and "Himcaps," are advertised on brightly colored signs posted on pharmacy walls, and "M-force," the most heavily marketed ED supplement, advertises frequently on Mexican network television. The label "Viagra" is frequently attached to food items thought to have reinvigorating properties, like the ostensibly aphrodisiac sea urchin broth now known locally as "Viagra soup." Finally, ED and Viagra jokes are common fare in television comedies and joking relationships among friends, often in contexts that lampoon the "macho" nature of Mexican men and their supposed obsession with frequent, indiscriminate

penetrative sex. Thus, Mexican men who experience decreasing erectile function do so in a context where the possibility of seeking medical mediation for this change is ever-present and easily accessible.

However, while references to ED and its treatments are ubiquitous in Mexico, this does not mean that men have adopted this understanding of erectile difficulty wholesale in their thinking and sexual practice. In fact, men's responses to decreasing erectile function in the context of Viagra often echo the concerns posed by social scientist critics of ED drugs. Many informants argued that medically mediated, "youthful" practices of sexuality are inappropriate for older bodies, relationships, and place as elders in their social worlds. Thus, interviews with older men showed that they tended to consciously reject medical ED treatment when faced with decreasing erectile function. While these men understood themselves in part through the lens of Mexican machismo – often saying that they were machos in their youths – relationships with female partners and family members, acknowledgment of their own aging bodies, and alternative ideas about masculinity had become more important to their emerging ways of being men. They often embodied "ex-machista" status by explicitly rejecting drugs like Viagra, instead seeking to gracefully inhabit their changing bodies by accepting decreases in erectile function as prompts to become faithful and to focus on developing affective bonds with wives and family members, rather than chasing women in the street.

Those study participants who did seek ED treatment often did so because they felt they were not old enough, or "ready," to make this life-course change. Instead, they feared that erectile difficulty would jeopardize existing, or foreclose the possibility of new, affective sexual relationships. They saw ED drugs as treating the physical symptom of a much more complex problem of masculinity. Men using treatments like Viagra often reported that they did not "feel like men" because they were failing in their relationships with women or in other social markers of manliness like work or finance. Many believed that their bodies were overtaxed by hard work, illness and emotional distress, and hoped that ED treatment would help them to embody one aspect of successful manliness and thus set them on the course to recuperating other aspect of their masculinity.

Thus, rather than simply using ED drugs to unthinkingly pursue penetrative sex, many men sought the bodily ability to perform sex acts that they saw as both appropriate to their particular phase of life, and believed would cement their desired, affective social relations with women. For instance, Pepe, a 68-year-old barber and self-styled ladies' man, used Viagra to have penetrative sex that reproduced a set of social relations that made him feel not only virile, but like a responsible provider. Pepe suffered from a narrowing of his urethra caused by the improper removal of a catheter over a decade ago, after which "my capacity lessened… My potency lessened." He is married and reports feeling great affection for his wife, saying that they love each other and "get along well." However, he says that they only have sex "sporadically, because it doesn't appeal to her" since she is diabetic and at an age, 61, where he believes many women lose interest in sex. However, her embodiment of chronic illness and lack of sexual interest does not match his desire to appear vigorous and have frequent sex. "I'm active," he explains.

Thus, Pepe maintains sexual relationships with other women in order to incorporate a "youthful" type of sexuality into his masculinity. He does not see this as a

betrayal of his wife, but a simple consequence of her lack of sexual interest. Because his wife does not want sex, he explains, "You have to find a little friend… out of necessity." Pepe is aware that this "necessity" has been abandoned by many men his age, and he eventually expects to make a lifestyle shift to fidelity. He says, "The moment must arrive when with age, my capacity will lessen. I will dedicate myself to my wife, and to my family." However, he does not feel that this time has arrived, so he uses Viagra in order to mitigate the decreases that have already occurred in his sexual function, combining the embodied practice of taking Viagra with the intersubjective practice of sex with younger women to act out a youthful and healthy sexuality.

Not only the fact that he has sex with younger women, but the affective components of, and manly responsibilities linked to, their relationships are crucial to his masculine selfhood. He meets weekly with young single mothers who he says do not demand, but do appreciate, "little presents, some little help." He says that he likes to go out with women who he knows are needy and who he can help. "I give, but voluntarily. A help… I help her, she helps me with my problem… It's beautiful." It is also important to him to satisfy his "little friends" sexually, and he has incorporated his Viagra use into his embodiment of being a skilled lover. He says that sex with Viagra, "is different – my partner is more satisfied," and "that way the experience is more complete, mutual." Thus, the Viagra-fueled embodiment of frequent penetrative sex enables Pepe to construct social relationships in which he can live out a specific kind of responsible, patriarchal, but tender and considerate, and sexually vigorous masculinity. While this form of manhood is "traditional" in that it is based on penetrative sex, it also incorporates elements of an alternative masculinity based on the provision of not only material, but emotional, support to the women in his life.

## ARTs in the Middle East

While male infertility was previously seen as a stigmatized condition in the Middle East, fieldwork in the new millennium has revealed that men are now challenging the conspiracy of silence around this experience (Inhorn 2004a). This seems largely due to a normalization process occurring over time as a result of the "medicalization" of male infertility. Men acknowledge that there is increasing openness about male infertility these days, particularly in light of the modern infertility treatment services being provided and advertised widely across the Middle Eastern region (Inhorn 2003). Furthermore, once inside treatment centers, men seem to begin understanding male infertility as a problem, "like any other medical condition." Thus, they typically stated in interviews that male infertility "has nothing to do with manhood."

For many men who have accepted this new "medical model" of infertility, male infertility is *not* the major "crisis of masculinity" that it is supposed to be for "traditional" forms of Middle Eastern manhood. For example, George, a Lebanese Christian oil executive, explained that there are now two views of male infertility – an "insider's" and an "outsider's" perspective:

> In Lebanon, yes, male infertility does affect manhood. Men don't want to admit they can't have children. They're not men any more. But this is not the view of people inside treatment. People who are "in" know it *is* a medical problem. So we don't feel this

> problem of manhood or womanhood. In our company, four to five people have IVF babies. One guy was married for 15 years, and he went to Singapore [for IVF]. Then another one went there. So, in my company, people talk about it. I tell everybody about it. I don't mind. Because it's easier to tell everyone what you're doing. Even at work, it's easier to tell them, so that they just stop asking. My boss said, "You've been married for more than two years and you didn't get your wife pregnant yet?" I said, "I'm trying, but I couldn't get my wife pregnant yet." Two days ago, I told him I'm coming for IVF. But this is *very* uncharacteristic of Lebanese people. People think like, "Manhood. He can't have children." So a lot of people blame the woman, even when it's male infertility. This is because people are secretive. They don't know the problem is male infertility, and so they say [it's from] the woman.

When George speaks of IVF in his interview, he is referring to the newer variant of IVF called intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI). First developed in Belgium in the early 1990s, ICSI has allowed thousands of severely infertile men to father children with their own sperm. As long as even one viable spermatozoon can be retrieved from an infertile man's body – including through painful testicular aspirations and biopsies – this spermatozoon can be injected directly into the oocyte with the aid of a "micro-manipulator" on a high-powered microscope, effectively forcing fertilization to occur. Over the past two decades, ICSI has become widely available in assisted reproduction centers in the West, and it has been available since 1994 in the Middle East. First introduced in Egypt, it then quickly spread to IVF centers in other Middle Eastern countries, and is now the most commonly performed ART in the region.

Indeed, the arrival of ICSI in the Middle East has led to a "coming out" of male infertility and a boom in the local IVF industry. Hundreds of thousands of infertile Middle Eastern men are now undergoing ICSI each year, with clinics opening up in order to meet local demand. Large countries such as Egypt, Iran, and Saudi Arabia each boast more than 50 IVF clinics where ICSI is performed. Even the small and lesser-developed countries of the Middle East, such as Yemen and Oman, now host urban IVF centers where ICSI can be obtained. The very success of this regional IVF industry – fueled by the significant demand for ICSI – bespeaks the medicalization of male infertility, men's willingness to try this medical technology, and the growing regional acceptance of male infertility as a medical issue rather than stigmatized defect (Inhorn 2004a). As George's story shows, many men are self-consciously using ARTs not to embody "traditional" masculinities, but to embody roles of fatherhood set into affective marital ties.

Thus, in both Mexico and the Middle East, men's sexual and reproductive embodiments ground individual enactments of masculinity that, especially when they require medical assistance, are often quite self-conscious. Since stereotypes of local masculinity involve strong dimensions of virility and fertility in these sites, men who experience bodily change or difficulty in these areas may explore treatment options that "rehabilitate" their virile, fertile manhood. Yet, as the following ethnographic cases show, men's relationships with these technologies are not straightforward. Rather, depending upon the type of medical technology and social context, men perform new types of embodied masculinities that they view as appropriate to their changing bodies, social situations, and cultural contexts. The following case studies show how men in each site sought to reshape their sexual / reproductive embodiment in order to live out a masculinity centered on affective bonds with lovers, wives and family.

## MEXICO: JOSÉ'S STORY

José, a divorced, 40-year-old construction worker, was one of the few men who came to the hospital urology department specifically for ED treatment. Though soft-spoken, he was open about his sexual and other problems, and hungry for treatment information. He saw his erectile difficulties to be caused not only by physical problems, but also by the emotional consequences of his failed marriage and subsequent dating experiences, as well as his troubles at work. José understood his erectile problems to result from a failure to perform successful masculinity in these arenas, resulting in an unmanly embodiment marked by a lack of sexual desire. José hoped that ED treatment would restore this desire, in turn helping him to more successfully interact with women both sexually and romantically, and thus restore his status as a "normal" man.

José reported that he sought treatment, "because I have an erection problem, I need stimulation, appetite to have sex with a partner. I've had this problem since 2003, I've lost the sexual appetite, I need to have – to be well." He reported that his "lack of desire" was linked to a series of problematic interactions with women. His sexual difficulties began in the same year that he split up with his wife; he said that, "There was a problem, we were splitting up, my sexual appetite was diminishing."

His divorce was directly related to health problems that had limited his capacity to work and earn money. When asked why he and his wife split up, he explained: "It's a historical problem. We were good, but when I got a pacemaker in 2003 – when I was born, there wasn't money, my parents didn't take me to a doctor and they say my heart is very slow – my wife saw that I wasn't going to achieve anything because I was sick." [Interviewer: "Achieve what?"] "Something in life, having something."

At the time he received the pacemaker, José was working in construction and his wife was a housewife. He took a less physically taxing job, doing maintenance in a condominium community, but his wife complained that he did not earn enough and worked too many hours. As a result of these quarrels, he says, "Bad moods arose, we got angry over anything. We split." His wife stayed in their home with their three children, and he "went to the street."

José said that a final, emotionally problematic, interaction with a woman cemented his sexual difficulties. He says that his sexual problems were caused by the trauma of his divorce, as well as by this subsequent experience: "It was also due to… after that [the divorce], I met a girl, we tried to have sex, I saw the problem. She had an infection, she told me before." [Interviewer: "Which?"] "Herpes. That, when it got in here [pointing to his head], it really made me think, 'I shouldn't do this, how foul.' I didn't want to have sex."

However, he felt obligated to sleep with her, in order to comply with manly duties that he understood to entail both sexual penetration, and consideration for his partner's feelings. Nevertheless, he found it "difficult to achieve erection," and told her he could not do it again; "she left sad." José says that, "After that, now I can't do it. If I see a pretty girl, I don't grow, I don't feel arousal, it doesn't appeal to me. I need to feel arousal, appetite. I don't feel anything. I don't think about it anymore – if I think about it, I get nervous."

Thus, health problems related to childhood poverty caused difficulties in José's work life, which in turn hampered his ability to provide for his family and maintain a positive

emotional relationship with his wife. José believed that the emotional pain caused by his divorce curtailed his "sexual appetite," which was further damaged by a troubling sexual experience that combined a lack of desire with the fear of sex causing bodily harm. In this case, an interlinked web of structural, social, and emotional problems had come together to be embodied as a lack of desire that José would come to define as ED.

Through medical treatment for this lack of desire, José both asserted that failings in multiple areas of life that were significant for his manhood, and also altered his embodied sexuality. Using ED treatment thus broke one link in the chain of events that together formed a faltering masculinity. Although even thinking about sex had become a source of emotional pain for José, he continues to seek medical treatment that he hopes will restore his sexual desire and erectile function. When asked why, he replied, "I want to return to having that, because it's normal, the normal life of a man. I think, I'm sick, I have a problem, I'm not living normally." He says that he wants to have a partner again, although he cannot meet one now because, "I'm afraid that I won't function. Before when I saw a pretty girl, lots of erection, arousal. Now even if I see a pretty girl – when I see someone I like, I get nervous, weak."

It is clear that José hopes to return to what he considers a "normal" masculine state, in both mind and body, by overcoming the lack of desire caused by problems in multiple areas of his life. Yet, the medical treatment he has received has not helped with his sexual problems. Over the course of his treatment-seeking, José was prescribed multiple ED drugs, but he felt wary of them and usually decided against using them. He said that he once tried sex with an ED drug and was unsatisfied with the experience. He used it with a friend from his hometown, with whom he discussed his heart problems. He said, "I achieved erection, but very little… Successful, but only a little. I was very tense, nervous. I had penetration, but was not that firm."

José thus fantasizes that the use of a medication can cause him to physically embody manly sexuality in a way that will bring his emotions and social relations in line, but simultaneously believes that the emotional toll of his interrelated loss of sexual confidence and desire is a complexly social problem that cannot simply be medicated away. His embodied lack of desire is intimately related to nervousness, unhappiness, a history of failed relationships with women and embodied ill-health. Unlike Pepe's use of Viagra to have sexually and emotionally fulfilling liaisons that enable him to act out the sort of masculinity he desires, José has been unsuccessful in using technology to foster the sorts of interaction that would make him feel like a "good" man. This difference seems to be partly due to José's difficulties in the other areas of life, like work, that would make him feel successfully manly.

## Lebanon: Hussein's Story

Hussein is a 42-year-old police officer from Southern Lebanon who is infertile and still childless after nine years of marriage. Hussein's first words to the anthropologist were, "I have suffered a lot in my life." He next told the harrowing tale of his capture by the Israelis and two-year detention in the notorious Khiam Prison during the Lebanese civil war. He was put in solitary confinement – "where you could not see day from night in some of the cells, and there were no toilets" – and forced to eat the same food, without any meat, for the length of his imprisonment. He was also tortured with

electricity to his genitals on three separate interrogations, "and there were many interrogations." As he explained, "I wasn't married then, and I didn't do a sperm test before marriage because I was young then. This was almost 23 years ago. But *maybe* this [the torture] is the cause of my sperm problems." In addition, upon his release from Khiam in a prisoner swap with the Israelis, Hussein was involved in a major car accident, breaking 24 bones, suffering internal bleeding, and experiencing two months of unconsciousness as a result of a severe head injury that required brain surgery. He reiterated, "The war was very bad. We lived our life in the war, and I suffered a lot."

Today, Hussein suffers from variable oligospermia, sperm counts that fluctuate below normal. "I've had *many* semen tests," he explained. "The number goes up and goes down. It is not fixed. But there is 'weakness,' the doctors said." Although he has impregnated his 35-year-old wife four times, she has gone on to miscarry early in each pregnancy.

In an attempt to try to overcome his infertility, Hussein underwent varicoceletomy, a major urological operation to strip varicose veins from the testicles. However, varicoceletomy is a controversial and generally inefficacious surgery (Inhorn 2007b; Inhorn 2009), and Hussein now believes that this pointless operation only helped the Lebanese physician with his "commerce." In addition, Hussein has taken many hormonal medications, Humegon, Pregnyl, and Clomid, all in unsuccessful attempts to increase his sperm production.

Finally, upon learning that his infertile male cousin had visited an IVF clinic and had produced triplets with his wife, Hussein decided to follow suit. As he explained, "We had hoped to get pregnant and make a baby without doing IVF, since she's been pregnant four times. But she's 35 years old now. We've tried, but now I'm 42 and she's 35, and we're afraid we'll get too old." Hussein continued,

> In our society, when a woman is the cause [of the infertility], the man will leave her and divorce her. So society will not have mercy on a women who doesn't have a baby. But I'm only afraid that she'll reach an age when she can't have children, and then our society won't have mercy on her. I don't want her to experience this. I won't allow this social pressure. It usually happens, but I don't allow it. In general, I don't allow other people to interfere in my life.

According to Hussein, his wife has been his only sexual partner, because "I'm committed to my religion, to the *shari'a* [Islamic law]. I respect and protect the woman, and I don't just follow my [sexual] desires." Indeed, as a pious Shia Muslim and member of the Hizbullah "resistance," Hussein explained why he could not shake the female anthropologist's hand – or any woman's hand – "not because I hate women, but because of my religion" [and its prohibition on "touch or gaze" across genders] (see also Deeb 2006).

Hussein also explained that he and his wife were committed to each other and deeply in love, despite their unfulfilled desire for a family. He described this lack as the only major problem in their relationship:

> We *love* children. In my family, we are seven brothers, and some of them have sons who are almost my age. In my family, we do care about having children. I have many nieces and nephews, and I like to treat my nieces and nephews kindly, which makes her jealous. Her psychology is *very, very* affected! We don't have any other problems except this problem of not having children.

However, he said that despite the psychological consequences of childlessness, their marriage remained strong. He stated, "But she accepts this situation, because if she didn't, she would have asked me for a divorce. She loves me *a lot*! And I would have changed [replaced] her if I didn't love her. It's very easy to divorce. But the husband and wife are one body, one soul."

When asked about whether his infertility affected his sense of manhood, Hussein said:

> I accept the fact that I'm infertile, but I always seek treatment and medicine to improve my situation. A person doesn't just sit and say, "This is from God." Of course, in the Qur'an… [Hussein stops momentarily to explain that in quoting a passage in Arabic from the Qur'an, one must truly understand what the Qur'an is saying, and then he or she will understand "everything."] There's a saying in the Qur'an that scientists are the people most afraid of God, because they get to that point of knowledge to really understand God's wishes.

He explained that ARTs are permitted by Islam, as long as procreation remains within the marital context:

> IVF is *halal* [permitted], if the sperm is from the man and the egg is from his wife, then there's no problem. But if the sperm is from outside [i.e., a donor], then it is *haram* [forbidden], and the same thing for the eggs, haram. But, if the egg is from my wife and the sperm is from me, then it is halal for the married couple. But in all Islam, in all religions, donation [of sperm and eggs] is wrong, according to my knowledge. The baby *has* to be from a married couple.

Hussein ended his interview by expressing his desire to have a child with his wife, the one and only woman in his life. Until this happens, they will continue to support the expenses of a child in a Hizbullah orphanage, as care for orphans is one of the major forms of charity to be performed by pious Muslims.

Indeed, Hussein's story defies the stereotypical masculinity that might be assigned to a member of Hizbullah. Hussein knows that Western outsiders view Hizbullah as a "terrorist" organization, but he explained that, "we're known as terrorists because we don't want our country to be occupied [by Israel]!" Hussein, in fact, prides himself on being a very law-abiding citizen and drug-enforcement officer in the police department, married to a teacher who he loves and respects. Furthermore, he attempts to "protect" her from the stigma of childlessness, which he "accepts" as a problem of his own reproductive body. Indeed, at several points in the interview, Hussein reiterated that his wife "doesn't have any problems."

A key way that Hussein is striving to embody this type of masculinity is through infertility treatment. He has undergone numerous semen analyses, taken multiple medications, and even undergone a useless genital surgery. His current motivation to try ICSI at an IVF clinic is influenced by his male relative, whose wife bore triplets. Although Hussein loves children and would very much like to become a father, his primary reason for trying ICSI is his concern for his wife, who he fears will be mocked by their "traditional" community if she reaches menopause without a child of her own. Indeed, it is his love for his wife – his feeling of being "one body, one soul" with her – as well as his Islamic piety, which has kept Hussein on the "straight path" toward ICSI.

## Conclusion

This chapter has focused on Mexican and Middle Eastern men who seek medical assistance to have sex and father children, thereby striving to alter their physical bodies in ways that will facilitate loving relationships, happy families, and, in Hussein's case, religious piety. These men acknowledge that multiple ways of being men can make sense in their cultural contexts, and they seek to act in ways that defy what they see as negative and stereotypical notions of Mexican and Middle Eastern masculinities.

The new forms of embodiment enabled by treatments for erectile dysfunction and male infertility can support a range of ways of being men. The ethnographic cases presented here show that men often use medically mediated embodiments to enact the kinds of social relationships that enable them to be the kinds of men they desire to be – caring husbands, lovers, and fathers. Even men like Pepe, who used medical help to perform more "traditionally" manly acts like infidelity, seek to use their resulting embodiments to engage in meaningful relationships that are key to their self-making practices. These sexual and reproductive health interventions are also a site from which men struggle against frequently intertwined structural and biological limitations, like José's health-related work problems that undermined his sexual confidence, or the torture and imprisonment that may have lowered Hussein's sperm count.

In summary, the Middle Eastern and Mexican men's experiences recounted here show that men use medical treatments to reproduce particular forms of masculinity. The forms of manhood that they strive to embody often differ dramatically and powerfully from the stereotypical discourses of manhood that circulate, both locally and globally. Thus studying masculine embodiment in the new millennium is both a means of unseating sometimes pernicious stereotypes, and for understanding emergent forms of masculinity now appearing around the globe.

## REFERENCES

Amuchástegui, Ana, and Ivonne Szasz, eds., 2007 Sucede que me canso de ser hombre. Mexico City: El Colegio de Mexico.

CNN, 2008 Elderly men to get free Viagra in Mexico City, CNN World November 2008. http://articles.cnn.com/2008-11-14/world/mexico.city.viagra_1_elderly-men-men-with-erectile-dysfunction-senior-citizens?_s=PM:WORLD accessed November 14, 2008.

Deeb, Lara, 2006 An Enchanted Modern: Gender and Public Piety in Shi'i Lebanon. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Dudgeon, Matthew R. and Marcia C. Inhorn, 2003 Gender, Masculinity, and Reproduction: Anthropological Perspectives. International Journal of Men's Health 2(1): 31–56.

Gutmann, Matthew C., 1996 The Meanings of Macho: Being a Man in Mexico City. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Inhorn, Marcia C., 2003 Local Babies, Global Science: Gender, Religion and in Vitro Fertilization in Egypt. New York: Routledge.

Inhorn, Marcia C., 2004a Middle Eastern Masculinities in the Age of New Reproductive Technologies. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 18(2): 162–182.

Inhorn, Marcia C., 2004b Privacy, Privatization, and the Politics of Patronage: Ethnographic Challenges to Penetrating the Secret World of Middle Eastern, Hospital-Based in vitro Fertilization. Social Science & Medicine 59: 2095–2108.

Inhorn, Marcia C., 2007a Loving Your Infertile Muslim Spouse: Notes on the Globalization of IVF and Its Romantic Commitments in Sunni Egypt and Shi'ite Lebanon. *In* Love and Globalization: Transformations of Intimacy in the Contemporary World. M.B. Padilla, J. S. Hirsch, M. Munoz-Laboy, R. Sember and R.G. Parker, eds. pp. 139–160. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.

Inhorn, Marcia C., 2007b Masculinity, Reproduction, and Male Infertility Surgeries in Egypt and Lebanon. Journal of Middle East Women's Studies 3(3): 1–20.

Inhorn, Marcia C., 2009 Male Genital Cutting: Masculinity, Reproduction, and Male Infertility Surgeries in Egypt and Lebanon. *In* Reconceiving the Second Sex: Men, Masculinity, and Reproduction. M.C. Inhorn, T. Tjornhog-Thomsen, H. Goldberg and M. La Cour Mosegaard, eds. pp. 253–278. New York: Berghahn Books.

Inhorn, Marcia C. and M. Fakih, 2006 Arab Americans, African Americans, and Infertility: Barriers to Reproduction and Medical Care. Fertility and Sterility 85(4): 844–852.

Lizza, E. F., and R. C. Rosen, 1999 Definition and classification of erectile dysfunction: Report of the Nomenclature Committee of the International Society of Impotence Research. International Journal of Impotence Research 11: 141–143.

Loe, Meika, 2004 The Rise of Viagra: How the Little Blue Pill Changed Sex in America. New York: New York University Press.

McKee Irwin, Robert, 2003 Mexican Masculinities. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Melhuus, Marit, 1996 Power, Value and the Ambiguous Meanings of Gender. *In* Machos, Mistresses, Madonnas: Contesting the Power of Latin American Gender Imagery. M. Melhuus and K.A. Stolen, eds. London: Verso.

Ouzgane, Lahoucine, ed., 2006 Islamic Masculinities. New York: Zed Books.

Potts, Annie et al., 2004 "Viagra Stories": Challenging "Erectile Dysfunction." Social Science and Medicine 59: 489–499.

Tiefer, Leonore, 1994 The Medicalization of Impotence: Normalizing Phallocentrism. Gender and Society 8(3): 363–377.

Wentzell, Emily, 2009 Composite Masculinities: Aging, Illness, Erectile Dysfunction and Mexican Manhood. Department of Anthropology, University of Michigan.

# CHAPTER 18 MEDIATED BODIES
## *Fetal Bodies, Undone*

*Lynn M. Morgan*

Ford's 2007 television commercial for its FlexiFuel vehicles begins with a dark, vaguely ominous scene – are those stars? – accompanied by ethereal new-age music and a faint swooshing sound. We might be looking at distant galaxies (see Michaels 1999). But the next frame makes it clear that we're in inner space rather than outer space, perhaps inside a human body. Grainy squiggles – are those worms? – move through something viscous. A globe glows in the distance, surrounded by starry circles of light, and suddenly we are oriented: ah, fertilization. We have been here before. The dreamy soundtrack gives way to the chiming of a music-box lullaby as the image shifts to the interior of a womb. A young embryo pulsates gently to the faint sounds of a heartbeat. The camera slowly pans over indistinguishable body parts, then a recognizable umbilical cord appears. A rippled appendage does not look quite human, however, and as the camera pans out we realize it is an elephant's trunk. Suddenly we're seeing an older, fully formed fetal elephant floating freely against the sound of swooshing fluids, a music box lullaby, and a distant (maternal?) elephant trumpeting. The screen switches, and we are inside a gravid dolphin uterus. We see shots of a fetal dolphin's tail and snout, while dolphin vocalizations bubble up under the melody. Gurgling noises mark another shift, this time to an image of twin polar bear fetuses. The commercial closes with a close-up of the fetal elephant's eye opening slowly, followed by that of the dolphin and the polar bear, each gazing plaintively at the viewer. The screen fades to black. White lettering appears: "For the next generation." Black screen, then "Ford FlexiFuel: Up to 80% more carbon efficient." The logo for Ford Motor Company appears with the tag line, "Feel the difference."[1]

This advertisement is entitled *Next Generation*. It provides a site for examining the topic I was assigned for this chapter, namely, "fetal bodies." I confess that the idea of writing a chapter on fetal bodies bothered me, because fetuses are by definition

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

contained within the bodies of pregnant women and cannot be said to possess "bodies of their own," as feminists have long argued. Would this chapter be read as a sleight against reproductive female bodies? By writing it, would I be complicit in what Tsipy Ivry calls the "trivialization of pregnancy" (Ivry 2010: 188)? After all, throughout the latter half of the 20th century, feminist theorists devoted considerable attention to the philosophical and political problems of pregnant embodiment and the historical emergence of fetuses as social subjects (Bordo 2003; Casper 1998; Franklin 1991; Morgan and Michaels 1999; Oaks 2000; Rapp 2001; Root and Browner 2001; Taylor 2008). Rather than reprising those themes here, however, I argue in this chapter that contemporary understandings of fetal bodies are increasingly generated and dominated by corporate media in the service of consumer capitalism. Fetal bodies, no less than other digitally manipulated bodies that we see every day in the media, are increasingly produced within what Susan Bordo calls "the empire of images" (2003: xvi).

This chapter uses the *Next Generation* advertisement as a vehicle for investigating the emergence of fetal embodiment as a discursive category. *Next Generation* was designed by Ford of Europe to air first in Sweden in 2007. It serves up a familiar story line, which in turn relies on the assumption that viewers will hold a biologized understanding of embryological development. The animals it depicts are highly anthropomorphized, and in the early seconds of the ad we are cleverly and deliberately misled into thinking that we are watching human development. It builds on "striking parallels between the iconic power of the blue planet and that of the foetus" (Franklin et al. 2000: 33). The ad aims to create a "small world, one earth" attitude, blurring the boundaries between human and non-human mammals. In the pages that follow, I invite readers to step outside an embryologically determined worldview and to question the prima facie existence of "fetal bodies" as a single, undifferentiated category of self-evident material thing.

Judging by the global spread of reproductive rights movements over the past fifteen years (see Goldberg 2009), it would be hard to argue that "fetal bodies" signal the demise of second wave feminism or imply that we have entered a post-feminist era. Even in the United States, where an intractable and often violent debate over abortion dates back more than 30 years, new legislative proposals concerning abortion are increasingly fetocentric, that is, framed in terms of the subjecthood and rights of fetuses as opposed to those of women (see Hardacre 1997: 3–6; Parry 2006). In other parts of the world, too, the legalization of abortion is increasingly challenged on the basis of the social meanings ascribed to the biologized materiality of embryos and fetuses. As I write these words, the Spanish constitutional court has agreed to hear a challenge to a 2010 law that permits abortion on demand until 14 weeks gestation; challengers cite an earlier ruling that women's rights would not take precedence over those of an "unborn child." In the United States, the Internet program "Abortiontv.com" asserts confidently that anyone who knew the "*physical* aspects" of fetal development would surely oppose abortion (Abortiontv.com 2010). In this context, the purported biological reality of fetal development provides grounding for political projects that recast the abortion debate as a matter of fetal materiality and fetal well being (see Oaks 2001).

Sarah S. Jain prompts us to consider how fetal bodies – as constructed rhetorically and semiotically by advertisers – are produced. Following Marx, she terms the body "the 'thing' itself…, the 'easily understood' material object," and goes on to show

how "the sign, the thing, and the consumer are not distinct but semiotically and materially co-constitutive" (Jain 1999: 44). In other words, ad, fetus, and consumer are all wrapped up in a project of mutual production and consumption. To the extent that we may find fetal bodies visually and theoretically seductive, responsibility lies in part with a plethora of new computer-generated imaging technologies and media through which beautiful, sanitized, appealing fetal images are created and promulgated (see Morgan 2009: 189–223).

This chapter builds on the work of the many feminist theorists who have traced the emergence and reification of fetal subjects. Efforts to exclude pregnant women and families from reproductive health and rights have a long history in the United States, where philosophers, political theorists, feminist anthropologists and sociologists, and a host of others have argued exhaustively about the social, moral, and political significance of pregnancy and fetal embodiment (see Petchesky 1987; Tauer 1995). I rely especially on observations made by anthropologists Janelle S. Taylor and Linda L. Layne, both of whom have written insightfully about how fetal identities are constituted through consumerism. Taylor's ethnography of obstetrical ultrasound shows how fetuses have come to be constructed "at the same time and through the same means, both as a 'commodity' and a 'person' " (Taylor 2008: 117). Layne's study of pregnancy-loss support groups shows how parents-to-be use consumer goods to symbolize babyhood for miscarried fetuses, suggesting that consumerism is a part of "the actual practices of person-making in our culture" (Layne 1999: 272). My aim is to show that the "fetal bodies" produced within and at the service of a system of consumer capitalism increasingly dominate and determine contemporary understandings of fetal subjects.

My objective is to question the symbolic vehicle, namely the charismatic fetal-fauna, that is deployed to make the pitch. The notion of "fetal bodies" and the ontological, material, and moral meanings associated with this concept are increasingly determined by media representations and technologies of production that have very little to do with corporeal embodiment as traditionally understood (see Duden 1993; Michaels 1999). Today's mediated fetal bodies draw their meanings from the collective social concerns with which they are (and are not) associated. Most specifically, they draw on a collective willingness to view fetuses as social beings, at the same time that they produce a willingness to see fetal bodies as attractive and appealing. To be theoretically enchanted by fetal bodies, then, is to be taken in by what Jain calls the "economic-discursive apparatuses that do the promising" (Jain 1999: 46). This allows us to forget that categories of embodiment and identity *for fetal as well as other* categories of embodied beings must be situated in space and time. To ignore this literature and the fact that ethnographers continue to publish theoretically rich studies of pregnancy and embodiment (see Ivry 2010; Pinto 2008; Teman 2010) is to risk becoming implicated – however unwittingly or unwillingly – in the ascendance and hegemonic scope of corporately produced fetal bodies. Here I focus on the peculiarity of these de-materialized and heavily mediated fetal bodies, even (or especially) when they appear before us as endearingly animated creatures with moist, limpid eyes.

How has it become possible to imagine that some category of thing called "fetus" possesses some category of thing called "body"? The ethnographic record offers ample illustration of societies in which the development of nascent human bodies and selves is attributed to divine, natural, and social forces not contemplated within Western cosmological systems (Kaufman and Morgan 2005). Anthropologists have

examined the production of fetal bodies within Western medical textbooks (Hahn 1995), and compared notions of fetal embodiment and ensoulment to illustrate the culture-bound terms of moral debate in different societies (Conklin and Morgan 1996; Csordas 2002). Despite the march of modernity and the dissemination of biomedical and embryological world views (Morgan 2009), alternate explanations of reproduction and fetal embodiment remain persuasive for many peoples. Anthropologists and historians understand that Western embryological origin stories are not the product (solely) of scientific revelation, but reflect cultural assumptions about kinship and relatedness, as well as the history of reproductive science (Clarke 1998; Franklin 1997; Hopwood 2000). Outside of these circles, however, discussions of fetal embodiment in the Western world have tended to overlook the ethnographic and historical records, and debates have been framed in terms of philosophy, bioethics, biomedicine, embryology, and religion. Certainly within the United States, biomedical science and bioethics have claimed disciplinary authority over fetal matters.

Critical theorists of the body have recently (re)turned from existential and phenomenological dimensions of embodiment (Csordas 1994) to materiality (Farquhar and Lock 2007: 10–12). As Myra Hird points out, feminist theorists were sometimes reluctant to discuss material dimensions of pregnancy and birth because they wanted to avoid biological determinism (Hird 2007: 2–3). Hird brings materiality back to the study of pregnant embodiment, citing recent discoveries in microbiology and genetics to show how genes and cells are exchanged, like gifts, among and between reproductive bodies. But Hird's argument contains its own kind of biological essentialism, because she accepts that biological "facts" are and should be imbued with social value. She seems to support the assumption that biology provides the strongest foundation on which to build socially (and morally) meaningful relationships. Yet it is precisely the biological "facts" of fetal development that need to be questioned and analyzed; as Sarah Franklin argues, the so-called biological facts of reproduction constitute a folk model that is informed and sustained by Euro-American social theory (Franklin 1997: 24). Hird, on the other hand, tends to amplify (rather than attenuate) the conflation between "fetus" and "body." She starts with and builds upon the prevailing assumption that the social and moral significance of fetal development is (and should be) rooted in embodiment, beginning with fertilization and ending with birth. These are the kinds of assumptions, I would argue, that keep us from seeing the constructedness of folk models of embryological development.

As with any other worldview, the embryological view of life's beginnings keeps us from imagining questions that contradict or fall outside its purview, such as those contemplated by ethnographers of pre-implantation genetic diagnosis and in-vitro fertilization (see Franklin 1997; Franklin and Roberts 2006; Roberts 2007). The embryological worldview, for example, leaves little room to ask questions like, "When does the soul enter the fetal body?" or "What were you before you were an embryo?"[2] One plausible response to the latter question might be Jean-Paul Sartre's phrase, "Absolute, unthinkable and undecipherable nothingness." Ian Hacking quotes this phrase from Sartre in his essay, well known to anthropologists, called "Making up persons," in which he argues that it is impossible, in one time and place, to conceive of being a category of person that is particular to another time and place. Hacking's argument is easily applied to fetuses. "As with almost every way in which it is possible to be a person, it is possible to be a [fetus] only at a certain time, in a certain place, in

a certain social setting" (Hacking 2007: 159). I write this essay from a time and place in which certain kinds of beautified, naturalized fetuses are not only possible, but imperative (Michaels and Morgan 1999).

## Fetal Vehicles

My primary concern here is with the digitally produced, computer-generated fetal simulacra that increasingly inform collective understandings of fetal ontology. Car advertising is just one of the many venues in which such computer-generated fetuses appear, and analyzing the symbolism of the fetuses that appear in car advertising offers a window for understanding how contemporary fetal bodies are produced. Scholars of automobile advertising tell us that ads are effective to the extent that they "invoke symbols" (Paterson and Dalby 2006: 1) or draw from "a stock of collective representations" in ways that link them "with [the] desires, emotions, or attributes" of viewers (Conley 2009: 37). The choice of symbols used by advertisers provides a clue to the values and lifestyles that are likely to appeal to consumers. Paterson and Dalby argue that the symbols used in recent car advertisements, especially for sports utility vehicles (SUVs), reveal "an emerging imperial geopolitical structure" that is being imposed throughout the world. The symbols used in car advertising, they say, provide clues about "what sort of imperial formation" is underway (Paterson and Dalby 2006: 1). Similarly, a decision to use fetuses in car advertising reflects willingness on the part of viewers to look at fetuses and to associate them with qualities carmakers want to sell, including safety, protection, and corporate responsibility.

Indeed, anthropologists began to analyze the appearance of fetuses in car advertising two decades ago, when Janelle S. Taylor wrote a now-classic article about the emergence of what she termed the "public fetus" in a Harper's magazine ad for a Volvo. That advertisement used the then relatively new technology of obstetrical ultrasound to solidify the purported bond between adults and their unborn children. That ad depicted a large, black-and-white ultrasound image of a fetus that appeared to be waving its hand, over the caption, "Is something inside telling you to buy a Volvo?" Taylor began with a rhetorical question, "Not long ago a fetus tried to sell me a car – or should I say, a car tried to sell me a fetus?" (Taylor 1992: 67; see also Morgan 2009: 27). Her analysis demonstrated how the ad stirred feelings of love for the fetus, an urge to protect it, and anxiety about its safety. She showed how the purchase of a Volvo was offered as a way to resolve this anxiety, and how fetal imagery worked as a powerful tool to manipulate emotions at the same time that it fueled a desire to buy.

Public fetuses have grown up a great deal since then. To give just one example, the American public is now so familiar with ultrasound imagery that advertisers and filmmakers can dispense with the ultrasound frame, purporting to take viewers directly inside the public space of the womb. One thing that has not changed, though, is the importance of consumption as a facet of reproduction. As Taylor states, "consumption … to a significant degree *constitutes* the experience of pregnancy" (Taylor 2008: 126; emphasis in original). She points to pregnant women who regulate what they eat and drink on behalf of the fetus, and who risk prison sentences if they consume morally or legally illicit substances (Taylor 2008: 126–131). Taylor goes on to argue that consumption increasingly constitutes collective ways of "knowing" fetuses, when for

example ultrasound imaging services permit people to ascribe social identities and personality characteristics to fetuses. Truth claims about fetal bodies – as well as fetal bodies themselves – are "increasingly firmly embedded within U.S. consumer-capitalist society and culture, as commodities available for consumption like any others" (Taylor 2008: 143).

Since the Volvo ad appeared in Harper's, fetal bodies have become increasingly mass-marketed, mediatized, and commodified. Fetal imagery now includes a dizzying mix of "real" (2D, 3D, and 4D real-time obstetrical ultrasound) fetal images as well as facsimiles generated by toy-makers, visual effects artists, and modelers working in silicon. Fetuses are more apt to be mass-marketed, and the markets are huge: parents-to-be with disposable income, educational videos, entertainment. Some fetal products even come with their own automotive accessories: Mattel's pregnant Barbie doll, Midge, comes with a removable belly panel, extractable fetus-baby, and an optional Volvo accessory sold under the name, "Happy Family." There is a veritable media industry devoted to the production of fetuses, which in turn seem to generate their own reproduction in the form of sequels and copy-cat books and DVDs. Unlike the Volvo ad, these new fetal bodies look real enough to pass. A YouTube commenter inquired of the *Next Generation* ad, "Are these really ultrasounds?" No, those are not real ultrasounds, nor were any real animals used in making the commercial (Blanco 2007). According to the producers, the twin polar bears are completely computer-generated, while "the elephant and dolphin were scanned and then tracked over the shot footage to make the body parts and give each foetus life" (Glassworks London 2010). But does that reality even matter? Baudrillard could have appreciated such hyperreal public fetuses, created by advertisers with little or no pretense of materiality and nonetheless constituting what we understand to be real.

## *Next Generation* Tropes

The car business has changed, too, since Taylor wrote about the Volvo ad (since 1999, paradoxically, Volvo has been owned by Ford). Safety, rugged individualism, and sex appeal continue to be important components of auto advertising, but a more recent angle is to assert that buying a car can save the planet. This is a classic example of greenwashing, the term used when corporations tout their purported environmental sensitivity or the sustainability of their products in order to increase sales (Beder 2002). Capitalizing on faddish concerns about global warming and environmental destruction, *Next Generation* implies that buying a flexible-fuel car is an act of global altruistic activism and a potential solution to the environmental crisis. This advertisement builds on sentimental connections between baby animals, humans, and the fate of the planet. It expands beyond the anthropocentrism that used to characterize the appearance of fetuses in advertising (see Taylor 2008: 107), by indicating that we (human and non-human animals) are bound together in one world; it encourages viewers to "challenge notions of the accepted dichotomy between human and non-human" (Lupton 1999: 58). The *Next Generation* spot positions Ford as a modern-day Noah's Ark, dedicated to preserving the creatures of the planet. The car buyer in this analogy becomes a modern-day Noah: compassionate, capable, forward-thinking, and obsessed with saving these charismatic "pre-born" megafauna, one Ford at a time (Whatmore and Thorne 2000: 188).

Critics point out that greenwashing claims are at best selective and at worst deceptive and misleading. Timothy Luke, for example, argues that corporations use ecology to sell products "only if it reaffirms most of big transnational capitalism's existing forms of technology use, managerial centralization, and profit generation" (Luke 2001: 320). His analysis of Ford's green campaign shows that Ford began seriously to pursue environmentalism in the 1990s, primarily for business reasons. The company began to work on developing alternative fuel and hybrid vehicles, a mission funded in part by tens of millions of dollars in taxpayer-funded research grants from the U.S. Department of Energy. Luke argues that this "ecological reengineering" masks fundamental contradictions, beginning with the fact that the Ford Motor Company was the pioneer in an industry that has arguably "done more to destroy the environment than almost any other single act in the 20th century" (Luke 2001: 321). On the other hand, Luke overlooks the fact that Henry Ford's fortune has enabled the Ford Foundation to award many millions of dollars to social justice projects around the world, including those focused on sexual and reproductive rights and environmental sustainability.

Other critics of the Ford Motor Company have pointed out the hypocrisy of its environmental claims, given the fact that the company was a leading producer of gas-guzzling SUVs in the 1990s. The company spent "more than $45 million between 1998 and 2003 to lobby Congress and the Bush administration in support of laws that suppress corporate fuel economy standards" (Common Dreams 2004; see also Robison and Viscusi 2006; Shepardson 2008). Ford vehicles had the poorest fuel economy and worst greenhouse gas emissions of any American carmaker between 1999 and 2008. According to Sun Mi Ha, the fuel economy of the Ford fleet actually *declined* from 2003 to 2004, while $CO_2$ emissions increased (Ha 2008: 14). Meanwhile, delving behind the scenes of the Ford ad, we learn that the appearance of twin fetal polar bears is of particular significance, as "evolution brought about by climate change [which is, in turn, brought about by burning fossil fuels] has meant Polar Bears very rarely have twin cubs."[3] And in one additional paradox, the corn-based ethanol for which flexible fuel vehicles were initially designed has been blamed for food riots in several countries, and many biologists argue that it must be scrapped in favor of ethanol produced from less environmentally destructive sources (Fisher 2010). Obviously there is not room in advertising to highlight such ethical or practical complexities.

To be fair, though, *Next Generation* does not claim that its flexible fuel vehicles will save the planet. It does, however, imply that consumers should consider the impact that car choice might have on the future of elephants, dolphins, and polar bears. Why did the advertisers choose these animals? First, because animals are important signifiers "in modernity," as Nicole Shukin points out, "marking a shift to 'untamed ontology' or 'life itself' as a new cipher of … biopower" (Shukin 2006: 155). Second, these animals capitalize on the enduring popularity of cute, defenseless, imperiled baby animals dating back to Disney films such as *Dumbo* in 1941 and *Bambi* in 1942. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the elephant fetus in *Next Generation* seems a younger, intrauterine version of the big-eared Dumbo, updated for our fetocentric times.[4] (Just to demonstrate the recent biologization of origin stories, it is worth pointing out that the original Dumbo was delivered to his mother by a stork.) Third, charismatic megafauna have a huge following. Conservation biologists at the World Wildlife Fund and Wildlife Conservation Society may lament the "distortion of priorities towards

charismatic mammals" (Goodwin and Leader-Williams 2000: 258), but they know from experience that donors are more prone to open their checkbooks when the pitch includes large, endangered, photogenic mammals. Funds raised in this way can be directed toward habitat protection, which biologists say is more effective than efforts directed at saving single species. *Next Generation* draws together both themes, making a plea for protecting specific charismatic animals while implying that the womb is endangered habitat.

This message contains several ironies. In spite of the fact that feminists have criticized efforts to depict wombs as "maternal environments" (Oaks 2001: 4), recent epidemiological research shows that fetuses can suffer when pregnant women are exposed to traffic pollution. In 2009, epidemiologists in New Jersey found "that ambient air pollution, perhaps specifically traffic emissions during early and late pregnancy and / or factors associated with residence near a roadway during pregnancy, may affect fetal growth" (Rich et al. 2009). In other words, cars may exacerbate, rather than alleviate, problems of fetal endangerment. But of course humans are exposed to many toxins outside the womb (O'Connell 2003: 122), and one wonders why the epidemiologists in New Jersey chose such a fetocentric research topic: why did they decide to focus on the risk to fetuses rather than to children or other vulnerable bodies? The womb is not the only "environment" endangered by our collective addiction to fossil fuels. As I was writing this chapter, an explosion at the Deepwater Horizon oil rig off the coast of Louisiana killed eleven workers, and oil gushed unchecked into the Gulf of Mexico for several horrible weeks. Dozens of dolphins and a sperm whale were caught on film, coated in oil and struggling to survive as a direct consequence of our collective addiction to fossil fuels. Meanwhile, around the same time, 220 people died in the Democratic Republic of Congo while siphoning precious petrol from a tanker truck that had overturned on the highway, in an incident that was unique only for its exceptionally high mortality. Such images provide fitting context and an ironic antithesis to Ford's claim that automobility, even of the "flexible fuel" variety, could ever save the animals (human and otherwise) on earth. As Luke wrote, Ford is committed only to the proposition that, "Auto enthusiasm must remain the balance point for any sort of environmentalism" (Luke 2001: 317). There are indeed plenty of contradictions in Ford's history, legacy, and record of corporate social responsibility (for additional examples see Hartmann 1995: 124; Korey 2007; Shukin 2006).

It may be easy to assume a cynical attitude about claims made by car manufacturers, but what does this have to do with fetal bodies? As Bordo points out, we can be both critical of advertisers' manipulations "and still feel powerless to resist their messages" (Bordo 2003: xxvii). This brings us back to the question Taylor posed earlier: "Or should I say, a car tried to sell me a fetus?" Are you feeling yourself drawn in by the image of womb as gravely threatened location, or by the implication that we should all be concerned for the beings that reside there? The car is depicted as a symbolic womb or, in the words of Deborah Lupton, a "protective mother." The car's interior, Lupton says, sometimes represents a "little capsule" that shields passengers from "the harsh realities of the world outside" (Lupton 1999: 60). Cars are commonly cast as extensions of one's physical and psychic body, she says, and car advertisements play on this idea by representing cars as "merging into the body / self or engaging in a synergistic interrelationship of sex and machine in which the boundaries between each entity blur" (Lupton 1999: 61). Lupton makes reference to a print advertisement that

appeared in Australia in 2006, in which a glamorous, leggy, and very pregnant model in a skin-toned bathing suit leaned suggestively against an Altea car. The caption read, "Finally a family sports car." The advertisement was withdrawn, Lupton says, after complaints "that it offensively objectified pregnant women's bodies" (Lupton 1999: 60). Another interpretation might be that the ad was deemed offensive because of the way it eroticized advanced pregnancy. Ever since Demi Moore appeared nude and seven months pregnant on the cover of *Vanity Fair* in 1991, the objectification of pregnant bodies has become so ubiquitous as to be unremarkable. Images of pregnant bodies are only acceptable, however, as long as they represent the asexual beauty of the fecund body or the theme of maternal nurturing (Matthews and Wexler 2000). By showing the model in a come-hither pose, the Altea ad crossed a line, revealing uneasiness about sexuality (especially female-initiated sexuality) during advanced stages of pregnancy.[5] Lupton says that by allowing its occupants to enclose their bodies inside, the car generates "for ourselves a private space within a public space" (Lupton 1999: 60). For the purposes of this chapter, however, it would be more apt to note that advertisers and filmmakers who take viewers inside the womb are *generating public space inside what was conventionally private space.* They have turned the womb into a public forum, a location to which they stake claim (a claim which they not-so-generously propose to share with other car drivers and television viewers).

By building on the simultaneous allure and menace of the womb, viewers are encouraged to be attracted to fetuses and afraid for their fates. What do fetuses have to fear? In the United States, any answer to this question would have to include public health threats (lead exposure, cigarette smoking, alcohol consumption, mercury poisoning, and pharmaceuticals) and, perhaps most obviously, induced abortion. The tropes of fetal endangerment take different forms elsewhere in the world, depending on local contexts. In Gualeguaychú, Argentina, signs opposing construction of a paper mill showed a fetus wearing a gas mask, under the slogan, "No to the paper mills, yes to life."[6] In Guragon, India, a public service ad aiming to prevent female feticide showed a picture of a fetus crossing its fingers, as if to say, "I hope I'll make it."[7] In Israel, a newspaper reported that parents-to-be begin to experience fear from the time an ultrasound shows they are expecting a boy, because their sons are destined for compulsory military service. The accompanying illustration shows a fetal soldier, wearing a flak helmet and holding an automatic weapon. In the United States, though, the fearful fetus trope is invariably a code for abortion; its antithesis is found in pictures of bloodied, aborted fetuses (Cave 2009).

Anna Tsing recently summarized the findings of a long line of feminist fetal scholars when she wrote, "The antiabortion movement depends heavily on creating verbal and visual imagery with which to show the fetus as separate from the mother [or more aptly, the pregnant woman]. Appreciation of the fetus as a separate entity, a child who happens to be in the womb, is used to activate assumptions that the fetus, like a child, is innocent, vulnerable, and in need of the state's protection" (Tsing 2007: 236; see also Oaks 2000). Putting viewers directly in the womb, furthermore, helps to make pregnant females vanish; the disappearing woman is another enduring trope in the creation of fetal subjects (Franklin 1991). The Ford ad is obviously meant to "stand apart" from the abortion debate and its creators would probably want to deny any connection, intentional or otherwise, to the abortion debate. Abortion is conspicuous by its absence, however, and no analysis of the ad could be complete without

considering the wider political context in which the ad aired. In the United States and elsewhere, legislation was being introduced that would make ultrasound exams mandatory, criminalize fetal death, prohibit "abortifacient" forms of hormonal contraception, and define fetuses as juridical persons. *Next Generation* draws on some of the same rhetorical devices as anti-abortion advocates, especially by painting the womb as endangered space and its inhabitants as threatened with destruction. The ad does not need to take an explicit stand on abortion for this meaning to bleed through; as one commenter at AdCritic.com said of the *Next Generation* ad, "It'll definitely win the hearts of pro-lifers." Meanwhile, the ad erases real adult women, especially those who might have reason to consider abortion. The "Stop Female Foeticide" campaign in India, for example, ignores the plight of women who are not permitted to work outside the home, inherit property, or otherwise increase the value of their gender and so are under pressure to produce male children.

If megafauna are especially vulnerable in their unborn condition, consumption is proposed as their salvation. The idea that what adults consume affects fetuses is, of course, ancient (see Markens et al. 1997). In recent years, though, advertisers have taken that notion quite literally, for example, in an ad for a jalapeño hamburger from the fast food chain Carl's Jr. (see Taylor 2008: 128). The ad shows an animated, hip-hop-inflected, computer-generated fetus, sweating profusely while yanking on the umbilical cord and berating "Mom" from inside the womb for eating too many chili peppers. In a more upbeat, woman-friendly version of a similar message, the Italian beverage company Ferrarelle produced a 30-second television commercial it called "Baby Dance." A pretty pregnant woman takes a sip of sparkling water, whereupon viewers are instantly whisked inside the womb to watch the fetus start to smile, snap its fingers, and dance happily to the surging tune of "You make me feel like dancing."[8] The pregnant woman laughs in delight at these antics; if fetus is happy, then Mama is happy. The ad was made by a company in Milan, using a professional dancer in Los Angeles to model for the animation. Post-production, including "the 3D animation of the child, required six weeks in CGI [computer-generated imagery] with daily verifications" (Pubblicità Italia 2007; translated by Milena Marchesi). The computer animation is so compelling that words are unnecessary; unlike the talking fetuses of yesteryear (Morgan 2003), the fetuses in the Ford and Ferrarelle ads sell their products (and their fetal bodies) just by looking at us. The irony, of course, is that while these computer-generated fetal bodies are reacting to products we consume, we as viewers are consuming ever-more computer-generated fetal bodies. And apparently we are buying it, which is why you are reading a chapter called "fetal bodies."

It is nonetheless worth asking, as Charis Thompson (2002: 166) does of efforts to save African elephants: what are they to be saved from? How, where, and by whom should they be saved? How will success be assessed? To these questions we might add: Who monitors fetal bodies? Who gets to decide the fate of fetuses? Who is authorized to speak for fetuses? *Next Generation* implies that Ford will provide the intrauterine surveillance. This trope builds on the routinization of obstetrical ultrasound as a site where pregnant women are "constantly monitored" (Mitchell and Georges 1998: 112, quoted in Jones n.d.: 3). The trope is especially effective in *Next Generation* because wild animals are also patently "the objects of intensive surveillance and regulation in the name of conservation" (Whatmore and Thorne 2000: 187). When the authority to monitor and speak for fetuses is vested in Ford Motor Company, however,

the claim must seem nothing less than absurd. Yet this is precisely what *Next Generation* implies. To the extent that viewers accept the assertion, the effect is achieved in part by casting fetuses as innocent, vulnerable surrogates for Planet Earth crying out for protection. And who dares question the assumption of the "transcendent innocence of the fetus-as-child"? (Tsing 2007: 236). Likewise, who among European and American car buyers would dare question the assumption that more baby elephants are good for the planet?

This is precisely the assumption that must be questioned, however, in order to disrupt the sentimentalized, pronatalist, naturalized anti-choice implications of Ford's message and of "fetal bodies" more generally. To take just one concrete counter-example, we might consult Thompson's work analyzing different interpretations of what to do about the rapid growth of the elephant population in Kenya's Amboseli National Park in the 1990s. There, a surfeit of elephants threatened to ruin the local environment, eating an enormous amount of biomass, trampling forests, and compacting soils, leading to erosion. Conservationists who met to discuss the problem agreed that elephants had a "destructive effect on biodiversity," although they disagreed about how to handle it. Some advocated elephant contraception or the euphemistic "culling" of the population (Thompson 2002: 173). More recently, the production by a single elephant of ozone-depleting methane gas has been estimated at 2,000 liters per day, or a half-ton per year. One blogger put the equation in terms the Ford Motor Company might comprehend: "An elephant produces enough methane in one day to run a car 20 miles."[9] In other words, adult elephants are neither innocent nor ecologically inert. There are ecologically sound arguments for reducing their numbers. There can be such a thing as too many elephants.

With respect to the question of who gets to decide the fate of these fetuses, *Next Generation* makes the answer clear: you do. The choice is yours. You are the neoliberal consumer who takes personal (i.e., private) responsibility for making the right consumption choices. In this case, the Ford ad turns viewers into consumers, not just of cars but of fetal bodies; we are asked to consume these products of (their) conception (Morgan in press). Meanwhile, the parameters of our supposed consumer choices are restricted and overdetermined. Certain options are left out, such as the option to give up driving. We are not offered the option to take the train, bicycle, or walk. "In a marketplace economy," Jain writes, "freedom is only ever that which can be bought, never what one already has or is" (Jain 1999: 45; see also Luke 2001). Not driving is not an option. Likewise the option to give up reproducing is verboten; childlessness is not an option. Taylor talks about the Volvo ad working to "channel political passions into purchasing passions." Like the Volvo ad, *Next Generation* assumes and asserts that viewers and car buyers will of course want to protect these precious fetuses.

## Making Fetal Bodies

The genius of *Next Generation* is that it gives us both fetal bodies *and* the means to rescue them (Taylor 2008: 21). But how, precisely, are the models and computer-generated images produced? As with other kinds of fetal images that appear in the media, it is extremely difficult to find out how they are made (Morgan 2009: 219). Neither Ford nor National Geographic makes any effort to instruct viewers about which

images are photographs and which are not (probably because there is no clear line between the different modes of visualization). With swift editing and computer animation, the distinction between real fetuses, models, and computer-generated inventions is repeatedly and deliberately fudged. Yet the (literal) mode of production of these fetal bodies is important to understand, because it helps us to appreciate the enormously complex and expensive technical apparatus devoted to producing fetal bodies and make them read as the "real thing." It is well worth the effort to undress them.

Animated fetuses are so ubiquitous today that the mere fact of animation may escape our notice, so it is worth pointing out explicitly that today's fetal bodies often *move* and that this is a recent achievement. Animation is a vital feature of claiming to represent life; static images will not do. The use of 4D (or real-time 3D) ultrasound images – that is, those that move – is the basis of National Geographic's claim to novelty, which claims to allow us to "see inside the unique world of animal fetal development in a way never before possible."[10] But the program never tells us how those images are created, or who must stick his or her arm up an elephant's rectum to perform an ultrasound:

> It's a little trickier to get an ultrasound of an elephant [than of a dog]. The vet must first perform an enema to rid the animal of all its feces and clear a path in the rectum for the ultrasound transducer to be inserted. (The elephant is held in place with ropes.) The vet then inserts the probe to get images of internal organs. But because of the elephant's size, the process only yields partial views on the ultrasound screen … A dolphin can be trained to float on its side before the procedure. (Olsen 2006)

Yes, the techniques used to custom-make these fetal bodies are mind-boggling, which may explain why producers prefer to obscure the details of how such images are produced. One source of information for those details is the advertising trade literature, where we learn that *Next Generation* was conceived by Ogilvy Stockholm and directed by Martin Krejci at a company called Stink.tv. A London-based firm called Glassworks took five weeks to create the custom-made silicon models and computer-generated imagery. The resulting ad won a prestigious Escape award in 2008,[11] drawing praise from the judges for "the beautiful imagery without a vehicle in sight."[12]

Obviously, the profit motive is the only reason to go to such trouble and expense to produce animated fetal fauna. National Geographic plumbed the intrauterine animal theme in several episodes of its *In the Womb* series. *Animals in the Womb* was broadcast in December, 2006. The hour-long documentary featured the development of elephant and dolphin fetuses, and a litter of Golden Retriever puppies. National Geographic hired a visual effects production company, Bandito, based in Winchester, United Kingdom. Bandito, in turn, used a combination of images from models, CGI, and 4D ultrasounds of actual pregnant mammals. The 4D ultrasound technology does not produce high-quality images on its own, but the use of even grainy, jerky images from ultrasound lends scientific legitimacy to the synthetic images. Scientific legitimacy was also provided by three consultants from the Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine, who "provided numerous photographs of canine uteruses, fetuses and placentas and critiqued the models that were made to portray stages of fetal development" (Cornell University 2006). In other words, professors from the veterinary school provided photographs of dead animals' reproductive organs taken

from their comparative anatomy and embryology collections, and National Geographic re-presented those *dead* specimens as icons of fetal *life* (Morgan 2009: 197).

This layering of different technologies is characteristic of how bodies – including fetal bodies – are represented now; images from one realm – biomedicine, education, entertainment, propaganda – are freely appropriated in another. Such dense layering is both visually appealing and ontologically confusing, perhaps by design (Morgan 2006). It does not really matter whether the images are "real," however, if one is rushing to cash in on a winning formula. *Animals in the Womb* spawned a 2007 sequel called *Inside the Living Body*, and a six-part series about parasites (not to be confused with fetuses, despite the analytic temptations) called *Monsters Inside Me*.[13] A run of knock-off documentaries about gestational development among non-human animals included programs about domestic dogs and cats (predictably, given the huge market of pet owners) as well as "extreme" animals that rank high on the scale of weird-and-gross modes of reproduction: a red kangaroo (marsupial), emperor penguin (following the 2005 sleeper hit, *March of the Penguins*), parasitic wasp (dramatically kills its host), and lemon shark ("self-sufficient hunters from the time they are born"[14]). The series continued with human gestation, with separate programs devoted to a singleton pregnancy, identical twins, and multiples; a four-piece boxed gift set of DVDs is available for $44.99 on Amazon.com. It takes a remarkably expensive social and commercial apparatus to produce "nature's" fetal bodies.

## Conclusion

The fetal bodies portrayed in *Next Generation* teach us how to see by building on several familiar tropes. There is the trope of fetal autonomy, in which female bodies are rendered largely invisible, extraneous, and unnecessary. There is the trope of car as womb and car/womb as Mother Earth (see Duden 1993), the site where environmental contamination *and* its antidote get generated, internalized, and reproduced, and where intervention can make a difference to the next generation.[15] There is the trope of consumption, which implies not only that fetuses deserve good "stuff," but that fetal well-being depends on our "choices," with all the loaded political connotations of that word. It is scarcely possible in this context to "choose" to encounter fetal bodies that have *not* been computer-generated or digitally enhanced (Dumit and Davis-Floyd 1998: 2; see also Mitchell and Georges 1998: 120). Those of us who do not work in obstetrics or gynecology have few, in any, opportunities to encounter unmediated fetal bodies. The only exceptions include the cordoned-off rooms of traveling anatomy exhibits (Morgan 2009: 239–240), the pages of teratology textbooks (Hunter 2010), the halls of the few remaining prenatal anatomical displays (Cole 1993), or through personal (and usually quite isolated, and isolating) experience with miscarriage (Layne 2003).

> Now, in 2003, virtually every celebrity image you see – in the magazines, in the videos, and sometimes even in the movies – has been digitally modified. Virtually every image. Let that sink in. Don't just let your mind passively receive it. Confront its implications. This is not just a matter of deception – boring old stuff, which ads have traded in from their beginnings. This is perceptual pedagogy, How to Interpret Your Body 101. These images are teaching us how to see. (Bordo 2003: xviii)

The category of "fetal bodies" is problematic in part because the collective capacity to see them critically is being worn down under pressure from an onslaught of (often) gorgeous and glamorized imagery. At times I am susceptible to it myself. I feel myself being gathered among the many participants, to use Bruno Latour's term, who make "this *thing* … exist and [who] maintain its existence" (Latour 2004: 246). Meanwhile, the power of feminist critique to counter the personification and embodiment of fetuses seems to be waning, as even the most sophisticated theorists of embodiment shed their critical countenance in favor of "fetal fascinations" (Franklin 1991). This brings us to the theoretical crux of the proverbial fetal matter: the production of computer-generated imagery overwhelms other ways of imagining and knowing fetal bodies, including those produced by embryological anatomy and the phenomenology of pregnancy (Duden 1999; Morgan 2009). Fetal bodies are a national and global hegemonic project, to the extent that they are liberated from prior constraints and corporeal contexts. I find myself inexorably drawn into the project of granting an independent existence to these "things," as in the writing of this chapter which makes me complicit in a project I abhor. But it is too late now, I suppose, to urge you not to read it.

## Acknowledgments

Thanks to Melissa Jones for helping to elaborate this analysis and for sharing two research papers she wrote on these topics. I am grateful to Milena Marchesi for providing Italian translation of materials related to the Ferrarelle spot, and to James Trostle for comments.

## NOTES

1 A video of the advertisement can be viewed at http://nofatclips.com/02007/07/10/flexifuel/flexifuel.mp4 (accessed 14 November, 2010).
2 Elsewhere I have argued that Western theologians increasingly frame their arguments about the beginnings of life in embryological terms, leaving aside outdated religious arguments (Morgan 2009: 21).
3 http://www.glassworks.co.uk/index.php?link=description&job=22 (accessed14 November, 2010).
4 Paul Wells draws attention to a phenomenon he calls "recombinancy" in animated television programs: "if … recombinancy is most obviously understood as the recirculation of materials and cultural resources which already enjoyed favorable dissemination and market acceptance, it is important to note that each version of the form … still operates as a *re-interpretation* of the material and an echo of the primary developments that prefigured the Disney style" (Wells 2003: v25; emphasis in original).
5 A 2010 book on human sexuality contained the sentence, "Some, perhaps many, pregnant couples are afraid to have intercourse for fear of hurting the fetus" (Greenberg et al. 2010: 248).
6 Thanks to Monica Gogna for bringing this to my attention.
7 http://adsoftheworld.com/media/print/capital_advertising_stop_female_foeticide (accessed 14 November, 2010).
8 http://www.revver.com/video/915026/ferrarelle-baby-child-water-you-make-me-feel-dance-dancing/ (accessed 14 November, 2010).

9 Did You Know This? May 30, 2009. http://www.orble.com/an-elephant-produces-enough-methane-in-one-day-to-run-a-car-20-miles/ (accessed 14 November, 2010).
10 National Geographic "In the Womb: Animals," http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/episode/in-the-womb-animals-2864#ixzz0rzqOkN00 (accessed 14 November, 2010).
11 The awards were given out by Escape Studios, a London-based school of computer animation and digital effects. Digital Arts Online. 2008. Escape award winners announced, April 1. http://www.digitalartsonline.co.uk/news/index.cfm?newsid=9985 (accessed 14 November, 2010).
12 http://www.commondreams.org/news2004/1209–09.htm (accessed 23 November 2010)
13 VFXRecruit; http://www.vfx-recruit.com/company_new.php?UserID=1041&ltp=1&profile (accessed 26 June, 2010).
14 National Geographic. In the Womb: Extreme Animals. http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/series/in-the-womb/3708/Overview#tab-lemon-shark-gestation (accessed 26 June 2010).
15 Similarly a magazine advertisement for AFM Safecoat paint shows a pregnant woman's belly and a can of paint, with the line, "Safer for this generation and the next."

## REFERENCES

Abortiontv.com http://www.abortiontv.com/Lies%20%26%20Myths/thetwo.htm (accessed 14 November, 2010).
Beder, Sharon, 2002 Global Spin: The Corporate Assault on Environmentalism, 2nd edition. Totnes Devon: Green Books.
Blanco, Sebastian, 2007 Ford's new Pro-Green Advertising – Ever Seen a Polar Bear Fetus? AutoBlog Green, March 28. http://green.autoblog.com/2007/03/28/fords-new-green-advertising-ever-seen-a-polar-bear-fetus/ (accessed 14 November, 2010).
Bordo, Susan, 2003 In the Empire of Images: Preface to the tenth anniversary edition. *In* Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body. pp. xiii–xxxvi. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Casper, Monica J., 1998 The Making of the Unborn Patient: A Social Anatomy of Fetal Surgery. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
Cave, Damien, 2009 Behind the Scenes: Picturing Fetal Remains. New York Times, October 9. http://lens.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/10/09/behind-19/ (accessed 14 November, 2010).
Clarke, Adele, 1998 Disciplining Reproduction: Modernity, American Life Sciences, and "The Problems of Sex." Berkeley: University of California Press.
Cole, Catherine, 1993 Sex and Death on Display: Women, Reproduction, and Fetuses at Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry. Drama Review 37(1): 43–60.
Common Dreams, 2004 Shareholder Resolution Questions Ford on Global Warming Policies. Common Dreams Progressive Newswire. http://www.commondreams.org/cgi-bin/newsprint.cgi?file=news200… (accessed 8 July 2010).
Conklin, Beth A. and Lynn M. Morgan, 1996 Babies, Bodies, and the Production of Personhood in North America and a Native Amazonian Society. Ethos 24(4): 657–694.
Conley, Jim, 2009 Automobile Advertisements: The Magical and the Mundane. *In* Car Troubles. Jim Conley and Arlene Tigar McLaren, eds. pp. 37–58. Aldershot U.K.: Ashgate.
Cornell University, 2006 Faculty Consult on *In the Womb: Animals* for National Geographic. December. http://www.vet.cornell.edu/news/articles/NGWomb.htm (accessed 14 November, 2010).
Csordas, Thomas J., ed., 1994 Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Csordas, Thomas J., 2002 A Handmaid's Tale. *In* Body/Meaning/Healing. pp. 88–99. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Duden, Barbara, 1993 Disembodying Women: Perspectives on Pregnancy and the Unborn. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Duden, Barbara, 1999 The Fetus on the "Farther Shore": Toward a History of the Unborn. *In* Fetal Subjects, Feminist Positions. Lynn M. Morgan and Meredith W. Michaels, eds. pp. 13–25. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Dumit, Joseph and Robbie Davis-Floyd, 1998 Cyborg Babies: Children of the Third Millennium. *In* Cyborg Babies: From Techno-Sex to Techno-Tots. Robbie Davis-Floyd and Joseph Dumit, eds. pp. 1–20. New York and London: Routledge.

Farquhar, Judith and Margaret Lock, 2007 Introduction. *In* Beyond the Body Proper: Reading the Anthropology of Material Life. Margaret Lock and Judith Farquhar, eds. pp. 1–16. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Fisher, Douglas, 2010 Is Ethanol from Corn Bad for the Climate? Scientific American. February 12. http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=ethanol-corn-climate (accessed 14 November, 2010).

Franklin, Sarah, 1991 Fetal Fascinations: New Dimensions to the Medical-Scientific Constructions of Fetal Personhood. *In* Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies. Sarah Franklin, Celia Lury and Jackie Stacey, eds. pp. 190–205. London: Harper Collins.

Franklin, Sarah, 1997 Embodied Progress: A Cultural Account of Assisted Conception. London: Routledge.

Franklin, Sarah, Celia Lury and Jackie Stacey 2000. Global Nature, Global Culture. London: Sage Publications.

Franklin, Sarah and Celia Roberts, 2006 Born and Made: An Ethnography of Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Glassworks London, 2010 http://www.glassworks.co.uk/index.php?link=description&job=22 (accessed 25 June 2010).

Goldberg, Michelle, 2009 The Means of Reproduction: Sex, Power, and the Future of the World. New York: Penguin.

Goodwin, Harold J. and Nigel Leader-Williams, 2000 Tourism and Protected Areas – Distorting Conservation Priorities Towards Charismatic Megafauna? *In* Priorities for the Conservation of Mammalian Diversity. Abigail Entwistle and Nigel Dunstone, eds. pp. 258–276. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Greenberg, Jerrold S., Clint E. Bruess and Sarah C. Conklin 2010. Exploring the Dimensions of Human Sexuality, 4th edition. Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett.

Ha, Sun Mi, 2008 Ford Motor Company Sustainability. IR/PS CSR Case #08-06. Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies, University of California, San Diego. http://irps.ucsd.edu/assets/033/10579.pdf (accessed 14 November, 2010).

Hacking, Ian, 2007 Making Up People. *In* Beyond the Body Proper: Reading the Anthropology of Material Life. Margaret Lock and Judith Farquhar, eds. pp. 150–163. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Hahn, Robert A., 1995 Divisions of Labor: Obstetrician, Woman, and Society in *Williams Obstetrics*, 1903–1989. *In* Sickness and Healing: An Anthropological Perspective. pp. 209–233. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Hardacre, Helen, 1997 Marketing the Menacing Fetus in Japan. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hartmann, Betsy, 1995 Reproductive Rights and Wrongs: The Global Politics of Population Control. Cambridge, MA: South End Press.

Hird, Myra J., 2007 The Corporeal Generosity of Maternity. Body and Society 13(1): 1–20.

Hopwood, Nick, 2000 Producing Development: The Anatomy of Human Embryos and the Norms of Wilhelm His. Bulletin of the History of Medicine 74(1): 29–79.

Hunter, Jack, 2010 Freak Babylon: An Illustrated History of Teratology and Freakshows. London: Creation Books.

Ivry, Tsipy, 2010 Embodying Culture: Pregnancy in Japan and Israel. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Jain, Sarah S., 1999 The Prosthetic Imagination: Enabling and Disabling the Prosthesis Trope. Science, Technology, and Human Values 24(1): 31–54.

Jones, Melissa, n.d. The Sustainable Fetus: An Exploration of the Intersection of Fetal Imagery and the Sustainable Development Discourse. Unpublished MS.

Kaufman, Sharon and Lynn M. Morgan, 2005 The Anthropology of the Beginnings and Ends of Life. Annual Review of Anthropology 34: 317–341.

Korey, William, 2007 Taking on the World's Repressive Regimes: The Ford Foundation's International Human Rights Policies and Practices. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Latour, Bruno, 2004 Why Has Critique Run Out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern. Critical Inquiry 30: 225–248.

Layne, Linda L., 1999 "I remember the day I shopped for your layette": Consumer Goods, Fetuses, and Feminism in the Context of Pregnancy Loss. *In* Fetal Subjects, Feminist Positions. Lynn M. Morgan and Meredith W. Michaels, eds. pp. 251–278. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Layne, Linda L., 2003 Motherhood Lost: A Feminist Account of Pregnancy Loss in America. New York: Routledge.

Luke, Timothy W., 2001 SUVs and the Greening of Ford. Organization and Environment 14(3): 311–335.

Lupton, Deborah, 1999 Monsters in Metal Cocoons: 'Road Rage' and Cyborg Bodies. Body and Society 5(1): 57–72.

Markens, Susan, Carole Browner and Nancy Press, 2007 Feeding the Fetus: On Interrogating the Notion of Maternal–Fetal Conflict. Feminist Studies 23(2): 351–372.

Matthews, Sandra and Laura Wexler, 2000 Pregnant Pictures. New York: Routledge.

Michaels, Meredith W. 1999 Fetal Galaxies: Some Questions About What We See. *In* Fetal Subjects, Feminist Positions. Lynn M. Morgan and Meredith W. Michaels, eds. pp. 113–132. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Michaels, Meredith W. and Lynn M. Morgan, 1999 Introduction: The Fetal Imperative. *In* Fetal Subjects, Feminist Positions. Lynn M. Morgan and Meredith W. Michaels, eds. pp. 1–9. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Mitchell, Lisa M. and Eugenia Georges, 1998 Baby's First Picture: The Cyborg Fetus of Ultrasound Imaging. *In* Cyborg Babies: From Techno-Sex to Techno-Tots. Robbie Davis-Floyd and Joseph Dumit, eds. pp. 105–124. New York: Routledge.

Morgan, Lynn M., 2003 Embryo Tales. *In* Remaking Life and Death: Toward an Anthropology of the Biosciences. Sarah Franklin and Margaret Lock, eds. pp. 261–291. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.

Morgan, Lynn M., 2006 Strange Anatomy: Gertrude Stein and the Avant-Garde Embryo. Hypatia 21(1): 15–34.

Morgan, Lynn M., 2009 Icons of Life: A Cultural History of Human Embryos. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Morgan, Lynn M., in press Getting at Anthropology Through Medical History: Notes on the Consumption of Chinese Embryos and Fetuses in the Western Imagination. *In* Medical Anthropology at the Intersections. Marcia Inhorn and Emily Wentzel, eds. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Morgan, Lynn M. and Meredith W. Michaels, eds., 1999 Fetal Subjects, Feminist Positions. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Oaks, Laury, 2000 Smoke-Filled Wombs and Fragile Fetuses: The Social Politics of Fetal Representation. Signs 26(1): 63–108.

Oaks, Laury, 2001 Smoking and Pregnancy: The Politics of Fetal Protection. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

O'Connell, Virginia Adams, 2003 When a Child Has Cancer: Protecting Children from a Toxic World. *In* Synthetic Planet: Chemical Politics and the Hazards of Modern Life. Monica J. Casper, ed. pp. 111–129. New York and London: Routledge.

Olsen, Stefanie, 2006 Animals in utero: An Inside View. CNET News, December 8. http://news.cnet.com/Animals-in-utero-An-inside-view/2100-11395_3-6141932.html (accessed 4 November, 2010)

Parry, Diana C., 2006 Women's Lived Experiences With Pregnancy and Midwifery in a Medicalized and Fetocentric Context. Qualitative Inquiry 12(3): 459–471.

Paterson, Matthew and Simon Dalby, 2006 Empire's Ecological Tyreprints. Environmental Politics 15(1): 1–22.

Petchesky, Rosalind P., 1987 Foetal images: The Power of Visual Images in the Politics of Reproduction. *In* Reproductive Technologies: Gender, Motherhood, and Medicine. Michelle Stanworth, ed. pp. 57–80. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Pinto, Sarah, 2008 Where There Is No Midwife: Birth and Loss in Rural India. New York: Berghahn Books.

Pubblicità Italia, 2007 Baby dance in 3D per lo spot Ferrarelle. http://www.pubblicitaitalia.it/news/Creativita–Marketing/Campagne-e-Spot/baby-dance-in-3d-per-lo-spot-ferrarelle_02100351.aspx (accessed 14 November, 2010).

Rapp, Rayna, 2001. Gender, Body, Biomedicine: How Some Feminist Concerns Dragged Reproduction to the Center of Social Theory. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 15(4): 466–477.

Rich, D.Q. et al. 2009 Ambient Air Pollutant Concentrations During Pregnancy and the Risk of Fetal Growth Restriction. Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health 63(6): 488–496.

Roberts, Elizabeth F. S., 2007 Extra Embryos: The Ethics of Cryopreservation in Ecuador and Elsewhere. American Ethnologist 34(1): 181–199.

Robison, Peter and Gregory Viscusi, 2006 Ecologists Unmoved by "Green" Wave in Advertising. International Herald Tribune, January 18, 2006.

Root, Robin and Carole H. Browner, 2001 Practices of the Pregnant Self: Compliance With and Resistance to Prenatal Norms. Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry 25(2): 195–223.

Shepardson, David, 2008 Big Three Lobby for MPG Break. Detroit News, July 10, 2008.

Shukin, Nicole, 2006 The Mimetics of Mobile Capital. Sociological Review 54(s1): 150–174.

Tauer, Carol A., 1995 Abortion: Embodiment and Prenatal Development. *In* Embodiment, Morality, and Medicine. Lisa Sowle Cahill and Margaret A. Farley, eds. pp. 75–92. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic.

Taylor, Janelle S., 1992 The Public Fetus and the Family Car: From Abortion Politics to a Volvo Advertisement. Public Culture 4(2): 67–80.

Taylor, Janelle S., 2008 The Public Life of the Fetal Sonogram: Technology, Consumption, and the Politics of Reproduction. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Teman, Elly, 2010 Birthing a Mother: The Surrogate Body and the Pregnant Self. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Thompson, Charis, 2002 When Elephants Stand for Competing Philosophies of Nature: Amboseli National Park, Kenya. *In* Complexities: Social Studies of Knowledge Practices. John Law and Annemarie Mol, eds. pp. 166–190. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Tsing, Anna, 2007 Meratus Embryology. *In* Beyond the Body Proper: Reading the Anthropology of Material Life. Margaret Lock and Judith Farquhar, eds. pp. 232–237. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Wells, Paul, 2003 "Smarter than the Average Art Form": Animation in the Television Era. *In* Prime Time Animation: Television Animation and American Culture. Carol A. Stabile and Mark Harrison, eds. pp. 15–32. London and New York: Routledge.

Whatmore, Sarah and Lorraine Thorne, 2000 Elephants on the Move: Spatial Formations of Wildlife Exchange. Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 18: 185–203.

CHAPTER 19

# MODIFICATION
## *Blurring the Divide: Human and Animal Body Modifications*

*Margo DeMello*

## Introduction

Humans have been adorning and modifying the human body for thousands of years, and most likely, since humans became human. People in cultures everywhere have endeavored to change their bodies in an attempt to meet their cultural standards of beauty, as well as their religious and or social obligations. In addition, people modify and adorn their bodies as part of the complex process of creating and re-creating their personal and social identities. Body modifications also often serve to distinguish the human, "civilized" body from the natural, animal body. However, where and how this boundary is conceptualized and established varies considerably across cultures and time. In this chapter, I explore these differences. But what is of particular interest to me is the practice of marking animal bodies, which has a long history and is a widespread practice today. If humans are human in part because of how they are marked, what about the animal bodies from which they must be distinguished? How does the cultural treatment of the animal body define and shape the animal itself, and what are the functions of such treatment? I argue that the primary purpose of the human modification of the animal body is to bring them under cultural control and to elevate our own status.

## Body Modification

Succinctly put, the modification of the body is the simplest means by which human beings are turned into social beings – they move from "raw" to "cooked" as the body

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

goes from naked to marked. According to theorist Michel Thevóz (1984), "there is no body but the painted body," because the body must always be stamped with the mark of culture and society; without marking, the body cannot move within the channels of social exchange. Many cultures that practice piercing, scarification, tattooing and other permanent body modifications believe that one is not fully human if the body is not properly adorned or modified. Thus all of the ways in which the human body has been altered historically can be seen as markers of human culture, and indeed, of humanity. The more altered the body, often the more human and civilized.

In tribal societies, the use of body paint, tattooing, scarification, piercing, head flattening, lip and ear stretching, and genital modifications like circumcision have multiple purposes, but the most central among them include decoration and the marking of social position. Temporary adornments are most typically used to mark transitional statuses or for specific social events, whereas permanent modifications are more commonly used to mark permanent changes in status, permanent affiliations, and cultural concepts of beauty.

For instance, the Nyangatom of Ethiopia and Sudan wear large lip plugs to indicate status and wealth, and only high status Tlingit girls were able to wear studs in the lips known as labrets. Lip plates among cultures like the Makonde of Tanzania often indicate status as the size of the lip plate increases with the wealth of the woman. Some societies restricted tattoos only to the elites, such as among the Maori prior to colonization, while in other cases the type of tattoo worn represented status or rank, as among the Marquesans and the Hawaiians. In societies in which body fat or even obesity is a sign of status, such as among the Ibo of West Africa, wealthy girls are fattened prior to marriage, and thin girls have less value.

While for the most part, body modifications serve to distinguish the human, civilized body from the natural, animal body, there are exceptions. Some temporary markings, such as body painting, generally used to mark transitional status within a ritual, are the exception to this rule. In ritual contexts, body painting is used to make the individual different, extraordinary, and, often not-human. Especially when combined with other practices, such as septum piercings, this is done to mimic the appearance and behavior of animals. For instance, during festivals in Papua New Guinea, tribesmen traditionally dress themselves like animals via the use of elaborate headdresses as well as body paint in order to placate spirits and ensure prosperity. Papuan people also pierce their septums and their ears and men wear horns, bones and pig tusks through the openings to make them appear fierce and animal-like for warfare.

While traditional societies use body marks as a sign of inclusion in the community, with the development of agriculture and the state, we see for the first time the state marking power on to individual bodies, through the use of tattoos and brands to punish criminals, denote slave status, or mark ownership, practices which began with the Thracians, Persians, Greeks and Romans.

The Persians, for example, tattooed slaves and prisoners with the name of their captor, master, and sometimes the Emperor, and Roman criminals were permanently marked on the face with either the crime or the punishment. Castration is another method by which servants and slaves were controlled in some states, or by which prisoners were punished; generally this refers to the testicles being removed, but in Imperial China, palace servants had their penis, testicles and scrotum removed.

## The Human–Animal Border

What makes humans different from animals? From a biological perspective, humans *are* animals. In other words, we, like dogs, cats, or insects, are multi-cellular, eukaryotic creatures which use carbon for growth, move independently, sexually reproduce, and must eat other organisms to survive. But while we know that this is true, in Western culture we still consider humans to be "more than" just animals and think of humans as special, distinct, and separate from all other animals. However, the divide between humans and other animal species is neither universally found nor universally agreed upon. Anthropologists and historians have shown that there is quite a bit of cultural and historical diversity in this regard. In many non-Western societies, nature and animals are not necessarily categories that are easily opposed to culture or humans.

For instance, there are societies that do not recognize "animals" as a distinct category of beings. Hunter–gatherers in particular tend to see humans and animals as related, rather than distinct, and humans are as much a part of nature as are animals. Anthropologist Tim Ingold (1994) emphasizes "the giving environment" in foraging cultures, where people share with one another and with the environment. In these cultures, there is no rigid division between society and nature, nor even between persons and things. Rather than attempting to control nature, hunters seek to maintain proper relations with animals. Of course they have to hunt, but they often seek the animals' pardon when they do so.

Even in non-Western societies that do share our human / animal categories, the borders between human and animal are often fluid, with animals (and often humans) being seen as having the power to reincarnate into the other species. For instance, the nomadic Turkic people of Central Asia believe that they descended from wolves; in particular, a she-wolf named Asena was said to have nursed a baby human, leading her to give birth to a race of half-wolf / half human babies who became the Turkic people. Similarly, there are many societies which have animals as creator figures, as in Hinduism, whose myths feature a divine cow mother, created by Brahma, and Prithu, a god who, disguised as a cow, created the earth's plants. Among the Tlingit, the raven is the creator god. In other cultures, people can be turned into animals by gods or by magic, as in the Greek belief that Artemis transformed a nymph into a bear (which later became the constellation Ursa Major). And a variety of cultures have animal gods or spirits which can manifest themselves in either human or animal form.

Among ancient Egyptians, the border between human and animal was present, but not absolute. Egyptians thought that animals worshipped Ptah, the god who created both humans and animals. In addition, cats were considered to be deities, and the sun-god Ra could manifest himself as a cat. The Ainu people of Japan are another culture with animals as gods; for example, the bear is the head of all of the gods, and when the gods visit earth, they take on the appearance of animals.

Animals play a role in the kinship systems of people around the world as well. For example, many Native American and Australian groups recognize animals as totems – important genealogical figures to whom members of a clan trace their ancestry, and who provide protection. Animal totems are found in Africa as well; for example, the Kadimu of Kenya believe that they are descended from pythons. Other cultures believe that the souls or spirits of the dead are incarnated in animals. In Thailand it is believed

that white elephants may contain the souls of the dead and among the Zulu, Kafirs, Masai and Nandi of Africa, the snake is seen as the incarnation of dead ancestors.

Finally, transmigration, in which a person transforms into an animal, is a common belief in both shamanistic cultures and cultures with a belief in witchcraft. Both shamans and witches are thought to possess this ability; some Amazonian tribes see their shamans as jaguars in (temporary) human form. Witches can not only transform themselves into animals but often have animal familiars who serve their interests.

The belief in transmigration has also been found in state-level cultures as well. Pythagoras believed that human souls transmigrated into non-human animals after death, which formed the core of his argument against eating meat. In addition, Hinduism holds a belief in reincarnation which extends beyond the borders of individual species.

The absolute divide between human and animal, as well as the differential valuing of human and animal, arose with the domestication of animals and the switch from one mode of subsistence to another: from collection to production (Ingold 1980). Collection (i.e. hunting wild animals and gathering wild plant foods) entails an *interaction* with nature. Production (or farming or herding), on the other hand, entails *intervention* with nature. Even pastoral societies which rely on animals for their subsistence tend to relate differently to those animals than do agricultural societies, because there is a mutual dependence between human and animal. Among the Nuer of Sudan, for example, it is believed that one should not kill an animal solely for food; if they do so, the cow may curse them. With the rise of agriculture, especially in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, a new concept of animals and humans emerged, with humans transcending and controlling animals and nature.

In the West, the separation of human and animal is reinforced in both classical Greek thought and Biblical accounts of creation. In *Politics*, Aristotle (1946) distinguished animal from human because of the human ability to speak, which forms the basis for humans' ethical existence. Animals, because they lack this ability, thus were created to serve human needs. In addition, Aristotle saw the soul as having three parts: a nutritive part, which plants have, a sensitive part, which animals have, and a rational part, which only humans have.

Early Christians (and before them, Jews) borrowed Greek thought about animals – especially theories such as Aristotle's which devalued the body in favor of a higher consciousness lacking in animals – as well as the concept of the soul, borrowed from Egyptians, and created a theology which reifies human difference from, and superiority over, animals. In the Book of Genesis, the distinction is clear: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Genesis 1: 26). St Augustine, writing in the fourth and fifth centuries, also felt that humans are valued precisely because of their link to the divine, a link which is not shared by animals (or women, for that matter). The Medieval notion of the Great Chain of Being or *Scala Naturae*, borrowed from Aristotle, in which God created all of life according to a hierarchy of higher and lower beings, with man just beneath God, and animals below humanity, further reinforces this view.

This division between human and animal was further solidified through the writings of St Thomas Aquinas, who maintained that the world is divided into persons, who have reason and thus immortal souls, and non-persons, and that non-persons are

essentially things which can be used in any way to serve the interests of people. Persons are persons because they are rational, and thus have intrinsic value and ought to be respected, whereas animals, being irrational, have only instrumental value and can be used in any way humans see fit. Aquinas (1955) wrote that the subjection of other animals to man is natural, and thus man owes no charity to animals.

This distinction between human and animal became universal throughout the West, and was strengthened through both social practice and philosophical thought. In Europe in particular, animals were thought to have been created expressly for human exploitation. Nature was considered a force to be subdued, and Christian clergy, going back to Aquinas and the Great Chain of Being, were especially inclined to emphasize that humans were both radically different from and superior to all other creatures. With animality posited as something inferior to humankind, and as something to be conquered and exploited, early modern Europeans made concerted efforts to maintain distinct boundaries between themselves and animals. Bestiality was thus an extremely serious crime, often considered a capital offence. This concern with the human–animal boundary has also been used to explain medieval Europeans' fear of werewolves, and their preoccupation with monsters and mythical beasts – especially half-human, half-animal creatures.

The rise of the traveling freak show in colonial-era Europe was tied to this preoccupation. After the initial exploration of the Polynesian islands in the 18th century, English sailors brought back tattooed natives to display in pubs, dime museums and fairs. These "savages" were displayed alongside exotic and dangerous animals and other "oddities," and later, after the popularization of Darwinian evolution, were thought to be missing links between civilized humans and animals. Other popular freaks were those – human and animal – born with disfiguring diseases or disabilities, and gaffes, or creatures created out of the parts of multiple beings. Early documented sideshow attractions included a woman from New Guinea displayed in 1738, a FeeJee Mermaid (marketed as a mummified body of a mermaid but probably created from the bodies of a fish, monkey and perhaps an orangutan) first displayed in 1822, and Chang and Eng, a pair of conjoined twins who were displayed starting in 1829. In cases like P.T. Barnum's long running "What Is It?" attraction, the freak was played by two men; one who was born with very short legs, and one who was mentally retarded and also possessed a sharply sloping forehead. Both men portrayed "wild men," or missing links between animals and humans.

In all of these cases, the "freak" was freakish precisely because of the freak's blurring of the human–animal border. Animal–human wonders like lobster boys, dog-faced girls and frog boys were the most astonishing, and led to the new science of teratology in the nineteenth century. With this change, freaks moved from being signs of Satan to being seen as part of God's natural order. Ultimately, this interpretation was also discarded in favor of the missing-link theory that developed after Darwinism, which saw such creatures as literal half-human, half-animal monsters.

The discovery of African apes by Europeans was another example of how unsettling it was for humans to see animals who so clearly challenged the human–animal border. Long before Darwin, chimpanzees and, especially, gorillas were thought to be hairy and savage humans or part-humans, and their existence generated a huge amount of anxiety and excitement when they were first exported from African and displayed in Europe. Even today, 150 years after the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species*,

many are still unsettled by the notion that we are related to apes. The more primatologists discover about their use of tools and language, and their possession of self-awareness, the more fervently anti-evolutionists continue to fight to keep humans and apes separate.

As European philosophy evolved through the Renaissance and early modern period, the division between animals and humans widened, and the justifications for this border became both more sophisticated, but also hearkened back to Aristotle's formulation. As we saw earlier, Aristotle found that it was rationality and the capacity for speech that separated humans from non-human animals (and slaves from non-slaves), and that it was the purpose of the animal or slave to serve the more rational creature. Descartes in the 17th century claimed that mentality, and the ability to speak, were the primary characteristics separating humans from animals. Because animals are incapable of using language, Descartes considered them to be essentially machines – mindless automata which operate without higher thought or consciousness. A century later, Kant (1998) wrote that rationality was the key characteristic separating humans from other animals; because animals lack the capacity for rational moral choice, they are not moral agents and thus have no moral standing.

Today, human and non-human bodies carry different moral and legal meanings, with very different implications. To be human, and to possess personhood, is to not just be a part of culture, but to have the capacity to *make culture* and to *create history*. While under American law today, personhood is automatically conferred upon human beings upon birth, regardless of mental or physical capabilities, the rights of personhood are not conferred upon non-human animals. Instead, humans are treated by the law (and indeed, by most of society) as categorically different from other animals, and this difference is today understood as deriving from the human capacity for culture; humans are thought to alone possess intelligence, language, self-awareness, and agency. Those characteristics give humans, and humans alone, the basic rights of life and freedom from persecution and pain. In addition, these characteristics give humans the right to control those who lack them, i.e. other animals.

## Different Kinds of Bodies

Animal bodies are not the only kinds of bodies to be othered by philosophical discourse and social practice. We can find strong parallels between society's views of animals and its views of some types of people. We saw already that with the rise of colonialism, non-Western peoples and people with disabilities were considered freakish, or not-quite-human. These beliefs were taken to an extreme through the practice of slavery.

Whether in the classical civilizations or in the modern world, slave bodies were considered to be legally and morally, and even biologically, different from non-slave bodies. Aristotle (1946) saw slaves, like animals, as having been born for subjection and to serve human needs. Slaves were created with strong bodies for servile labor, and minds too feeble to rule themselves. The only difference, according to Aristotle, between slaves and domesticated animals is that the former recognize their need to be ruled; the latter don't even have that level of rationality.

With the European slave trade of the 16th through 19th centuries, the distinction between slave and non-slave became racialized, with Africans becoming synonymous with both slavery and savagery. Also at this time, the new biological science of racialism emerged, which served to justify slavery, colonialism, and racial segregation on the basis of the essential, biological differences between the races.

The history of race relations in the United States is a history of such racialization. Virtually every non-white (or non-English) ethnic group in the United States has been conceptualized at some point as savage, alien, and uncivilized. From Native peoples to Africans to Chinese and Mexicans, whites saw the behaviors of non-whites as being proof of their essential, and essentially different, natures.

From this perspective, Chinese were seen as clannish, lustful and deceitful; blacks were dangerous, sex-starved and dull-witted; and Mexicans were disease-ridden, lazy and superstitious. But these races were not just different – they were animalistic. Blacks in particular have long been considered bestial by whites (even today, some of the most provocative caricatures of President Obama liken him to an ape or monkey), but they are by no means the only group to have been given such a treatment. Famously, Jews in Nazi Germany were not just racialized but animalized – called vermin, rats, and cockroaches. Today, when anti-immigrant politicians refer to illegal immigrants, terms like "horde" are often used to evoke images of uncontrolled, breeding animals.

The othering of non-white groups is a central step in their disenfranchisement and ultimately, dehumanization. Othering is a precondition for oppression because it allows for distancing and detachment from the object of exploitation. Associating a person or a group with an animal creates a much wider gulf between self and other, and allows for, and legitimates, much greater exploitation. While some animal characteristics (like speed, bravery or even cunning) can be used to reflect positively on the person to whom it is associated, for the most part, the use of animal traits to refer to an entire social group is done to denigrate that group. Because animals are considered lower than humans, for a social group to be associated with animals is to visually demonstrate their primitive, savage, and non-civilized attributes.

If religion, philosophy and social practice demand that humans and animals be considered separate entities, and serve as a justification for the differential treatment of animals, then those same forces are at work in separating out some human groups from others. By positioning blacks, Chinese, Mexicans or Jews alongside animals, these groups too can be treated differently, and can be subject to various forms of social and state control.

Not only can marginalized groups be treated differently; they can be treated *like animals*. Thus we see that African slaves were transported to the New World in shackles and chains; sold at auction; bred for their labor and bought for their bodies; branded; whipped; and sometimes were made to wear muzzles. The children of slaves were removed from their mothers and sold separately, and "nigger dogs" were used to hunt escaped slaves. During the Holocaust, Jews were subject to forced sterilization, transported in cattle cars to concentration camps, and those in the Auschwitz complex were tattooed with identification numbers. Interestingly, some of these practices were inspired by the American eugenics movement, which itself was inspired by practices found in fancy animal breeding circles in the United States; another inspiration was the American slaughterhouse and its efficient methods of killing.

## Modifying Animal Bodies

As we have seen, non-human animals are thought to be qualitatively distinct from humans (or at least some humans) – they exist in nature, not in culture, and their behaviors are said to derive from nature. Humans have not only transcended nature; they have overcome nature, and thus, animality. Hence the practice of marking and modifying human bodies serves as a clear visual sign that humans are *not* animals, that they are cultural beings. And humans are not just bodies: they are bodies with a mind, a soul, a self. Animals, on the other hand, as we have seen, lack that key component. Body modifications, then, can be seen as tools to visually mark and enforce the human / animal boundary.

The very act of body modification is a centrally human act. No other animal can change its body in the ways that we can, and there is no evidence to suggest that animals want to change the appearance of their bodies. Yet, since the dawn of animal domestication, humans have been changing, sometimes radically, animal bodies through both temporary, but usually permanent, modifications. Here I refer to the physical alteration of animal bodies through selective breeding, surgery, tattooing, branding, genetic modification, cloning, and other practices.

The modification of animal bodies serves a very different purpose from body modification among humans: it functions to incorporate animals into culture, but *as property*, rather than as persons. Animal bodies are treated by law and common practice as objects which are owned and controlled. They can be bred, bought and sold, can be used for labor, for food, for entertainment, and as a collection of resources that are both separable and commercially transferable. Their bodies can be patented, manipulated, dismantled, and modified on both the genetic and physical levels.

While the human body today may be subject to a handful of commercial practices – prostitution, the marketing of human organs, blood and plasma sales, stem cell research, the patenting of products made from human tissues – there is still a deeply held assumption, grounded in law, that the individual person within that body should ultimately have say over what happens to that body. While even here we find exceptions – laws which prohibit or restrict abortion, the contemporary practice of slavery, or the trafficking in stolen human organs – there is still broad consensus around the idea that a human being is the only person with rights over their own body and its disposal.

But animal bodies are an entirely different matter. Because non-human animals have not been granted any of the legal rights of personhood, their bodies are not, ultimately, theirs to control. Each and every animal is owned by some (legal) person, or corporate or state entity. Even wild animals are owned by the state. Further, animal bodies are not simply objectified but are commodified, and the body modification practices to which animals are subjected are incorporated into these practices.

As we have seen, body-modification practices in tribal societies served to socially locate individuals within clan or tribe, to mark marriageability, to demonstrate achievements, and to beautify women. But with the rise of the state, markings like tattoos and brands as well as practices like genital mutilation became used to control deviant and unruly bodies – slaves, convicts, servants and the like. Not coincidentally, the use of body modification as a method of control derives from its use on animals. Through these practices, humans inscribe animal bodies with signs of their own power.

Since the first animals were domesticated for food, labor, and skin, domesticated animals have been transformed in a whole host of ways, both behaviorally and physically. Natural selection favored those physical and behavioral traits that made individual species, and individual animals, good prospects for domestication – lack of fear, curiosity, small size, and gregariousness, for example – making the earliest domesticates look and behave very differently from their wild relations.

Once humans began selectively breeding animals (and killing those whose bodies or temperaments were unwelcome) in order to emphasize or discourage certain traits, animals changed even further, resulting in animals who are, for the most part, smaller (yet fleshier), more brightly colored, with shorter faces, rounder skulls, and more variations in fur and hair type as well as ear and tail appearance. They also became tamer, friendlier, and more dependent on the humans who cared for them.

As farmers, and later show breeders, learned more about the inheritance of traits, animal breeders began selectively breeding animals for more specific characteristics, such as overall size, fur and wool color or texture, ear and tail shape, and more. Termed artificial selection by Darwin, selective breeding has led to the creation of hundreds of breeds of dogs, for example, one of the most intensively bred animals in the world. In the case of dogs, breeds were created in order to fulfill human desires; some breeds were created to retrieve ducks during a hunt, others were created to herd sheep, and still others were created to race. In the case of cattle and other livestock, animals were transformed through selective breeding to create animals who were tame, easy to breed, easy to feed, and easy to control, with the ultimate goal being to create animals whose sole purpose is to create a food source for humans.

With the advent of industrial methods of food production in the 20th century, changes in livestock breeds accelerated as livestock became meat-producing machines, manufactured and maintained for the highest profits. To produce the most meat in the shortest amount of time, animal agribusiness companies breed farm animals such as pigs and chickens to grow at unnaturally rapid rates. These changes have been encouraged by new developments in agricultural science, aimed at improving the productivity of food animals. For example, American beef cattle are routinely administered hormones to stimulate growth, and, to increase milk yield, producers inject dairy cows with hormones. Animal bodies are stuffed into "concentrated animal feeding operations," massive facilities in which animals are confined into small spaces and in which food, water, and temperature are controlled and "unnecessary" and "inefficient" animal movements are restricted or eliminated altogether.

Since the early part of the 20th century, farmers have been experimenting with creating new livestock breeds, via careful cross-breeding, in order to maximize size, fat composition, productivity, or other traits. Since the development of artificial insemination and the ability to freeze semen, cattle farmers are able to more selectively breed their prized bulls and cows to replicate the traits of the parents.

The pet and show industries, too, rely on artificial selection (and today, following the livestock industry, artificial insemination) to create breeds of animals with favorable (to humans) traits. Recent years have seen an escalation in the varieties of dogs, cats, and other companion animals being developed in order to appeal to discriminating consumers.

While the early breeds of dogs were created to highlight working traits, recent breeds have been geared more towards aesthetics. On the other hand, since cats are

not working animals, most cat breeds have been created for aesthetic purposes, with an eye towards color, size, fur type, tail, ear, and body type. The result is hundreds of breeds of dogs, and dozens of breeds of cats, rabbits and other species, all bred by large and small breeders to sell through the pet industry. Another result is a whole host of health problems associated with these breeds. Dogs in particular are at risk of problems associated with the odd proportions in body, legs and head that are bred into many of the breeds. German shepherds and golden retrievers are highly disposed towards developing hip dysplasia, and Chihuahuas and other toy dogs commonly develop luxating patellas. Even without specific genetic defects associated with certain dog or cat breeds, many modern breeds of dog or cat are unable to survive without close human attention. While dependency has been bred into domestic animals since the earliest days of domestication, it has accelerated in recent years with the production of animals such as Chihuahuas, who are physically and temperamentally unsuited to survival outside of the most sheltered of environments.

To better control the ultimate products – the animal bodies being produced – breeders of pet animals routinely cull those babies who don't conform to breed standards. For example, the American Boxer Club's code of ethics prohibits the sale by a club member of a boxer with a coat color not conforming to breed standards. Because up to 20 percent of all boxers are born white, this code necessitates the routine killing of a huge number of white babies.

Another form of artificial selection refers to the selection of deleterious traits in the breeding process. Japanese Bobtails (cats with a genetic mutation resulting in a bobbed-tail), hairless cats, and Scottish Folds (who have folded down ears) are examples of this type of breeding. More disturbing are cats that go by the name of Twisty-Cats, Squittens, or Kangaroo Cats, all of whom have a genetic abnormality which results in drastically shortened forelegs or sometimes flipper-like paws rather than normal front legs, and who are being selectively bred by a handful of breeders. The twisty-cat is reminiscent of the days of the circus and carnival freak show, when genetic abnormalities – both human and animal – were displayed to the public for education, entertainment and profit.

Genetic manipulation of animals represents a new scientific development that has irreversibly changed animal bodies. Because pigs, beef cows and chickens are created for one purpose – food consumption – their genes have been altered in a whole host of ways to suit that purpose, resulting in, for example, pigs engineered to have leaner meat, tailor-made to suit a more health-conscious consumer. Pig breeders are now able to purchase gene markers to modify their breeder swine in order to control for traits like the number of piglets born in a litter, how efficiently the pigs will process feed, how quickly they will grow, and how much, and of what quality, fat is present. Fast-growth genes now allow pigs to reach market weight three days sooner than those without the gene, which increases profits for pig producers, and pigs with the lean gene have less back fat and eat less feed. Producers can use genomic selection to reduce the prevalence of porcine stress syndrome, a fatal genetic condition that is triggered in conditions of extreme stress – conditions which are endemic to factory farming. Ultimately, pig producers will be able to feed their animals less, and produce more pigs, in less time, with less fat and more vitamin-rich flesh.

Meanwhile, the Meat Animal Research Center has now patented a gene that produces "double muscling" in cattle, producing more lean meat on the same size body. Belgian

Blue cattle are the result of this double muscling, and because of their enormous muscles relative to their bones, these cattle are susceptible to a huge number of medical complications, such as swelling of the tongue, which interferes with a calf's ability to nurse; congenital articular rigidity, a chronic ailment that affects a calf's ability to stand on its legs; cardio-respiratory problems which can cause death in calves; and birthing complications necessitating caesarian sections 90 percent of the time.

Genetically engineered animals are also becoming more popular among scientists who experiment or test products on animals. Genetically modified mice and rats are especially popular, allowing researchers to study the ways that genes are expressed and how they mutate. Genetic engineering has even found its way into the pet world, with the production of a new hypoallergenic cat (selling for $12,000–$28,000), created by manipulating the genes that produce allergens, and Glofish – zebra fish modified with sea anemone genes to make them glow.

In terms of reproduction, the cloning of animals is the wave of the future, allowing humans the greatest level of control over animal bodies. Thus far, the livestock industry has been most active in the use of cloning, cloning prized breeder animals in order to ensure higher yields by copying only very productive animals, but cloning is found in the vivisection and pet industries as well. Laboratory scientists are cloning mice, rabbits and other laboratory animals in order to ensure that the animals used in research are genetically identical, and to control for any imperfections. In the pet world, cloning has been less successful, but a handful of companies today offer cloning for pets at a cost of up to $150,000 per cloned pet. Dog cloning is the most controversial so far – 12 dogs are needed to produce a single cloned puppy, and in South Korea, where cloned dogs are produced, those donor dogs are often slaughtered for food afterwards. According to published reports of cloning studies, 3,656 cloned embryos, more than 319 egg "donors," and 214 surrogate mothers were used to produce just five cloned dogs and 11 cloned cats who were able to survive 30 days past birth.

Another way that animal bodies have been transformed is through surgical procedures. Because the control of animal reproduction is critical to maintaining populations of domestic animals, castration has been used for thousands of years to ensure that undesirable animals cannot breed, or to increase the size or control the temperament of certain animals. Castration methods include banding (in which a tight band is placed around the base of the testicles, constricting blood flow and eventually causing the scrotum to die and fall off after about two weeks), crushing (this method uses a clamping tool called a Burdizzo, which crushes the spermatic cords) and surgery (in which the testicles are removed from the scrotum by a knife or scalpel). In the 20th century, with companion animals rising in popularity, surgical techniques to remove the uterus and ovaries of female animals were developed, and spaying is now an extremely common surgery for companion animals, although it is very rarely performed on livestock.

Other forms of surgical modification have also been common for years, particularly in livestock and purebred companion animals. For example the last century has seen a number of procedures performed on livestock as a result of the close confinement necessitated by factory farm production. The de-beaking of hens (amputating, without anesthesia, the front of the chicken's beak) is common in the egg industry, where chickens are so intensively confined in tiny cages that they may attack each other out of stress and overcrowding. Even in situations where livestock are not as closely confined,

farmers often remove body parts to make caring for them easier. One increasingly common practice is tail-docking (without anesthesia, usually via banding) of dairy cows and sheep, in which producers amputate up to two-thirds of the tail, usually without painkiller. Pigs' tails are also docked, to keep intensively confined pigs from chewing each other's tails. Dehorning cattle is also becoming increasingly popular, as dehorned cattle require less feeding space at the trough, are easier to handle, and cannot injure other cattle, as injuries result in bruised meat which cannot be profitably sold.

In the pet-breeding world, many companion animals undergo surgical procedures in order to make them conform to the artificial requirements of the breed. Breed standards demand that certain dogs, for example, have their tails docked, their ears cropped, or both. In addition, many companion animals today undergo surgical procedures which are used to control unwanted (by humans) behavior. Some people, for example, have their dogs de-barked (by cutting their vocal cords) in order to reduce barking, and many cat owners elect to have their cats de-clawed (which involves amputating the front portions of a cat's toes) in order to prevent harm to their furniture.

Animal bodies are also marked with more explicit signs of ownership. Branding is the oldest form of marking ownership on animal bodies, and has been used since the ancient Greeks, Egyptians and Romans marked both cattle and human slaves with iron brands. Still popular amongst cattle ranchers today, brands are used to prevent theft, to identify lost animals, to mark ownership, and to identify individual animals. Today, freeze brands (which freeze, rather than burn the skin), ear tags, tattoos, and microchips are another method of marking livestock, laboratory animals, and companion animals.

While much less common than the above forms of modification, animals are also, occasionally, subject to tattooing, piercing, or hair dying, not for practical purposes, but for aesthetic reasons. The most common form of adornment for animals is found in the show and pet dog worlds, where long-haired breeds of dogs have their hair professionally cut and styled, often with barrettes and other accessories. Poodles, in particular, are expected to have a certain "look" which must be maintained via often rigorous grooming. Some people also dye their animals' hair, usually for a special event. Feed stores in the United States routinely sell dyed chicks and baby bunnies for Easter, for example, and some pet owners dye their own animals' fur for holidays like St Patrick's Day, either with commercially produced pet fur dye, or products like food coloring.

In the US and Europe, in the heyday of the circus and carnival sideshow, tattooed families were once a popular sideshow attraction, and they often included a tattooed dog. Today, some people involved in the body modification community pierce or tattoo their own pets, although most tattooists and piercers do not condone these procedures (which, after all, do hurt). Here, as with people tattooing or piercing themselves, the tattoos are ostensibly marks of individuality (although they likely reflect the owner's personality more than the dog's), and, like branding, marks of ownership as well.

## Controlling Animal Bodies

All of these uses of the animal body can be illustrated with Foucault's notion of biopower: the ways in which the modern state controls and regulates their citizens'

bodies (1998). With respect to human bodies, the use of branding to mark human slaves and convicts, a practice found in ancient Egypt and Rome and which endured into antebellum America, illustrates the power that the state wields over certain kinds of bodies. When it comes to animals, it's easy to see how society's needs and desires have shaped the changes to the animal body that we have been discussing. But it's also about control: individual control, industry control, and state control.

We can see important parallels between the control of animal bodies and many of the practices associated with the eugenics movement of the early 20th century, such as compulsory sterilization of the mentally or physically disabled, anti-miscegenation laws, and restrictions on immigration. It's not an accident that some of the major proponents of eugenics in the United States, like Alexander Graham Bell, were also active in the world of livestock breeding, and that the first American agricultural society, the American Breeders' Association, worked to apply selective breeding techniques, including forced sterilization of criminals and the disabled, to humans. But while those practices are now widely discredited or illegal when applied to humans (although one can argue that artificial reproductive technologies such as in-vitro fertilization and pre-implantation genetic screening are simply modern versions of them), there is very little public outcry or even interest in the controls established over animal bodies, unless, as in the cases of cloning or genetic manipulation of meat animals, they may adversely impact human health. Millions of people around the world support the work of non-profit organizations that work to protect the lives of animals, resulting, in recent years, in a number of concrete legal and social changes to the way that we deal with animals. Yet at the same time, the vast majority of the animals who live on this planet experience unspeakable suffering at the hands of humans; in the United States alone, 20 billion land and aquatic animals are bred, intensively controlled, and slaughtered for human consumption. Most of us, even the animal lovers, barely blink an eye.

What does evoke public outcry is the use of animal bodies in a way that challenges, once again, the human–animal border. Xenotransplantation, which is the use of animal organs in human bodies, is troubling to many precisely because of the way that it blurs the border. While animals are seen as bodies, and bodies alone, which justifies the ways in which they can be bred, sold, confined, manipulated, disassembled, and even consumed, humans are not just bodies. They are more than bodies. Animals can and are used as a set of parts, but when those parts are inserted into human bodies, the hard-fought border begins to dissolve.

I argue here that one of the primary reasons that humans modify their own bodies is to differentiate ourselves from (other) animals – to mark culture onto our bodies. I am also arguing that this same reason underlies all of the ways in which we have changed the shape, appearance, function, and indeed the very nature of animal bodies. Since the Neolithic Revolution, humans have been endeavoring to make animal bodies less wild, and less natural. While the goal is not to make them human – although it can be argued that the ways in which many owners dress their pets is an attempt to humanize them – it serves to bring them under human, and cultural, control. Tattooing, branding, artificially inseminating, de-beaking, de-horning, genetically modifying and cloning – all of these procedures serve to remove from animals their wild, uncontrolled nature, and much of their own agency, and to replace that with human control, generally in order to profit off of them. Through these maneuvers, we turn animals into products of our own making, to fulfill our own desires.

## REFERENCES

Aristotle, 1946 The Politics of Aristotle. Sir Ernest Barker, trans. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Aquinas, Saint Thomas, 1955 The Summa Theologica. Daniel J. Sullivan, trans. Chicago: Encyclopedia Brittanica.

Foucault, Michel, 1998 The History of Sexuality, vol. 1. The Will to Knowledge. London: Penguin

Ingold Tim, 1980 Hunters, Pastoralists and Ranchers. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ingold, Tim, 1994 From Trust to Domination: An Alternative History of Human–Animal Relations. *In* Animals and Human Society: Changing Perspectives. Aubrey Manning and James Serpell, eds. London: Routledge.

Kant, Immanuel, 1998 The Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals. Mary J. Gregor, trans. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Thevóz, Michel, 1984 The Painted Body. New York: Rizzoli International.

## ADDITIONAL READINGS

Bancel, Nicolas, Pascal Blanchard, Gilles Boëtsch, Eric Deroo, Sandrine Lemaire and Charles Forsdick, eds., 2009 Human Zoos: From the Hottentot Venus to Reality Shows. Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press.

Birke, Lynda and Mike Michael, 1988 The Heart of the Matter: Animal Bodies, Ethics, and Species Boundaries. Society and Animals 6(1): 245–262.

Bogdan, Robert, 1988 Freak Show. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Clutton-Brock, Juliet, 1987 A Natural History of Domesticated Mammals, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cohen Esther, 1994 Animals in Medieval Perceptions: The Image of the Ubiquitous Other. *In* Animals and Human Society: Changing Perspectives. Aubrey Manning and James Serpell, eds. pp. 59–80. London: Routledge.

Corbey, Raymond, 2005 The Metaphysics of Apes: Negotiating the Animal–Human Boundary. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Creager, Angela, ed., 2005 The Animal / Human Boundary: Historical Perspectives. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.

Darwin, Charles, 1859 [1985] The Origin of Species. New York: Penguin.

DeMello, Margo, 2007 Encyclopedia of Body Adornment: A Cultural History. Westport: Greenwood Publishing.

DeMello, Margo, 2007 The Present and Future of Animal Domestication. *In* A Cultural History of Animals, vol. 6. The Modern Age. Randy Malamud, ed. Oxford: Berg Publishers.

Franklin, Adrian, 1999 Animals and Modern Cultures: A Sociology of Human–Animal Relations in Modernity. London: Sage.

Fudge, Erica, Ruth Gilbert and Susan Wiseman, eds., 1999 At the Borders of the Human: Beasts, Bodies and Natural Philosophy in the Early Modern Period. New York: St Martin's Press.

Garland Thompson, Rosemary ed., 1996 Freakery: Cultural Spectacles of the Extraordinary Body. New York: New York University Press.

Gustafson, Mark, 2000 The Tattoo in the Later Roman Empire and Beyond. *In* Written on the Body: The Tattoo in European and American History. Jane Caplan, ed. London: Reaktion Books.

Haraway, Donna, 1989 Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science. New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall.

Henninger-Voss, Mary, 2002 Animals in Human Histories: The Mirror of Nature and Culture. Rochester: University of Rochester Press.

Hicks, Carola, 1993 Animals in Early Medieval Art. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Kappeler, Susanne, 1995 Speciesism, Racism, Nationalism… Or the Power of Scientific Subjectivity. *In* Animals and Women: Feminist Theoretical Explorations. Carol J. Adams and Josephine Donovan, eds. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Noske Barbara, 1997 Beyond Boundaries: Humans and Animals. Montreal: Black Rose Books.

Nussbaum, Martha, 2006 Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, Species Membership Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Oetterman, Stephan, 2000 On Display: Tattooed Entertainers in America and Germany. *In* Written on the Body: The Tattoo in European and American History. Jane Caplan, ed. London: Reaktion Books.

Patterson, Charles, 2002 Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust. New York: Lantern Books.

Podberscek, Anthony L., Elizabeth S. Paul and James A. Serpell, 2000 Companion Animals and Us. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Potts, Annie, 2008 The Mark of the Beast: Inscribing Animality through Extreme Body Modification. *In* Knowing Animals. Phillip Armstrong and L. Simmons, eds. Leiden: Brill.

Reiss, Benjamin, 2001 The Showman and the Slave: Race, Death, and Memory in Barnum's America. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ritvo Harriet, 1987 The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Rothfels, Nigel, 2002 Savages and Beasts: The Birth of the Modern Zoo. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Salisbury Joyce E., 1994 The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages. New York: Routledge.

Serpell, James, 1996 In the Company of Animals: A Study of Human–Animal Relationships. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Speigel, Marjorie, 1996 The Dreaded Comparison: Human and Animal Slavery. New York: Mirror Books.

Tattersall, Ian, 1998 Becoming Human: Evolution and Human Uniqueness. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Thomas, Keith, 1983 Man and the Natural World: A History of the Modern Sensibility. New York: Pantheon.

Waldau, Paul and Kimberley C. Patton, eds., 2006 A Communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science, and Ethics. New York: Columbia University Press.

Wilbert, Chris, 2000 Animal Spaces, Beastly Places: New Geographies of Human–Animal Relations. London: Routledge.

Williams, Erin E. and Margo DeMello, 2007 Why Animals Matter: The Case for Animal Protection. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.

Wolch, Jennifer and Jody Emel, eds., 1998 Animal Geographies: Place, Politics and Identity in the Nature–Culture Borderlands. New York: Verso.

# CHAPTER 20 NEOLIBERALISM
## *Embodying and Affecting Neoliberalism*

*Carla Freeman*

### Prelude: An Entrepreneurial Story

Colleen is one of three sisters, raised in a simple chattel house by her mother, a domestic worker who struggled to instill in her children Barbadian values of hard work, education, and faith in God. Petite, attractive, and with an open, confident smile, Colleen embodies many of the signature markers of a new, neoliberal cultural economy in her island home, Barbados. A keen and energetic student, Colleen graduated from one of the island's top secondary schools and landed a bank job in which she wore a smart double-breasted uniform, and established herself as a reliable and hardworking member of staff. But after traveling to the U.S. in her late teens for an Outward Bound experience, Colleen quit her job at the bank, trading her stable, secure, and in her eyes limiting prospects of the bank for the risky waters of entrepreneurship. Swapping "skirt suits" for climbing gear and head wrap, she was quick to point out the radical challenge this posed for "conservative minded Barbados," a country whose history of plantation slavery has cast physical exertion and the hot sun as realms to avoid, especially for respectable Afro-Barbadian women. Ten years ago, with $12,000 in savings, $5,000 from a government "youth entrepreneurship" loan, and some help from her then-fiancé, she turned her energies to converting 26 acres of "rab"(uncultivated) land into the island's first team-building and wellness retreat on the rugged East Coast.

Geared towards a diverse array of business people (banks, insurance companies, established Barbadian firms, church groups, new government funded summer camps, individual families, and tourist groups) her goal is to offer an introduction to the great outdoors, an opportunity to trust and connect with other people, to enhance physical

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

fitness, and most recently, by connecting with nature and stretching the body's "comfort-zone," to cope with the stresses and strains of everyday life. Her business signals a new consciousness about the body reflected in a rapidly expanding array of services being imagined in a time of neoliberal development. Likewise, her own trajectory marks a new path of middle-class mobility that blends traditional values and practices with ones that are signaling an emerging neoliberal esprit. Like women and men of all classes throughout Barbadian history, she maintains an elaborate "kitchen garden" albeit on her large home's rooftop and terrace from which she operates a side business selling herbs and vegetables to local supermarkets and grocery stores. Recently married, but childless and "not sure motherhood is her calling," Colleen eschews some of the key markers of Barbadian respectability: motherhood, her secure job, and the Anglican church of her husband's middle-class family. Having abandoned her large charismatic church, she has joined a small Pentecostal congregation with a preacher who counsels her individually.

If Colleen's own entrepreneurial trajectory departs from the conventions of her mother's generation, so too do her expectations and enactment of relationships, especially marriage. Like many other entrepreneurial women I encountered (Freeman 2007, n.d.) she expresses a new vision for marriage as an intimate "partnership" melding entrepreneurial and emotional desires, material and affective support and care that stands in contrast to the patriarchal middle-class norms of "days gone by."

When her own health began to fail two years ago, she scaled back on her business and "started really looking at what was happening … I was in a lot of pain, I was exhausted, I couldn't figure out quite what was wrong except the doctor kept saying, "well take some pain killers…" Colleen became increasingly conscious of women she knew or encountered in her business, working mothers and other entrepreneurs whose anxieties and longings manifest themselves in a variety of forms – escalating consumer desires for flat-screen TVs and new cars, along with the stresses of new credit card debt, the anxious and time consuming pursuit of daycare facilities and ways to insure their children's placement into the island's best schools, the pressure to pay for extra-curricular activities, lessons and special camps, and the associated exhaustion of shuttling kids amid a growing tangle of traffic. All this has been placed on top of what Colleen and others described as "the usual concerns": husbands' or partners' infidelity, the frustrations of answering to a boss, and looking after the home. An array of vague illnesses, exhaustion, "stress" and "depression" led Colleen to rethink her business idea and her own path in life. Returning to school and combining courses in sports management and psychology, she began to reformulate her entrepreneurial trajectory toward a "wellness-based program and retreat" and at the same time, to develop a deeper self-understanding.

Colleen's experience and that of the clients she describes can be read as an instantiation of a subtle yet powerful and new affective milieu in which the old divisions of work and life melt away and in which new subjectivities are being forged. As a new middle-class entrepreneur, she signifies the hopes of her nation's new approach to development, and embodies this set of dreams not only in terms of her role as an economic actor but in ways that permeate all dimensions of life. Here, the story of globalization and neoliberalism turns not only on the structural economic underpinnings of free markets, a shrinking role for the state, and retrenchment of public welfare systems, but also on a more general cultural framework within which these economic imperatives are increasingly articulated and intertwined, one in which *affective labor* is central in both the workplace and in the constitution of the self.

Emily Martin's work (1994) provided an early glimpse into this two-sided process, describing how neoliberalism's mandate of flexibility links the workplace to the self as sites of production. The demand for flexibility extends across domains of life from the laboring / managing body within corporate enterprise to the body's immune system, in which the individual not only must retrain herself for an ever-changing job market in the new economy, but is compelled to embrace a heightened sense of individualism more generally.

The critical role of the affective in neoliberal subjectivity is illustrated boldly in a figure such as Colleen, *an entrepreneur,* that heroic agent who for many signifies the quintessential symbol of neoliberalism itself (Bourdieu 1998; Harvey 2005). Although the neoliberal esprit is most evocatively encapsulated in the creed that we *all* become "entrepreneurs of the self" (Giddens 1991), this imperative is especially pronounced among new entrepreneurs like Colleen, seeking middle-class status and lifestyles: they must simultaneously hustle to provide new services and goods for the rapidly changing global marketplace and to consume new goods and services in an effort to fashion *themselves* as flexible, self-aware, and innovative actors in a new era. An analysis of this Janus-faced, neoliberal imperative, I suggest, can provide a window into a number of broad questions: How are the forces of neoliberalism embodied in the contemporary moment, and what are the cultural and class particularities of these transformations? What are the implications of affective labor as increasingly central to the global economy and how are these transformations gendered and imbued with culturally specific meanings? It is to these puzzles that I turn in this chapter.

## Neoliberal Production, Consumption, and the Self

Global capitalism is inscribed upon the body through the disciplinary fields of labor and production as well as a dramatically expanding array of consumption practices. Much has been written about the effects of global capitalism upon the bodies of its laborers, whether sex-workers, factory workers, migrant agricultural laborers, or domestic workers who travel across borders in pursuit of a living and of industries whose labor processes crisscross the globe tapping into, and cheapening, workforces wherever they ultimately land. Whether in sweatshops in New York, or *maquiladoras* on the Mexican border, brothels in Thailand or Los Angeles, or private homes in Taiwan or Rome, laboring bodies are shaped and disciplined in both dramatic and subtle ways. Bodies under globalization are sites of new modes of consumption as well. These range from changing habits of diet, expressed in expanding cuisines, changing nutritional profiles, eating disorders, and nutritional diseases, to transforming notions and forms of leisure, travel, sport, and entertainment. Globalization has also changed practices of adornment and expectations of service: Western consumers have come to expect inexpensive clothing and athletic wear to be fashioned by Chinese or Sri Lankan workers and polite and patient technological or other forms of assistance to be offered remotely by Indian or Irish customer service representatives thousands of miles away (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003; Mirchandani 2004; Parreñas 2001). As a recent body of ethnographic works make clear, the importance of mass consumption and global media for growing populations the world over, including those who labor to produce these very consumer goods and services, now

marks new landscapes of desire, longing, and middle-class imaginings (Lan 2006; Liechty 2003; Schielke n.d.).

The embodiment of neoliberalism unfolds in other realms of life as increasing numbers of people seek medical and therapeutic interventions as part of a transnational circuit of healthcare and other body practices, whether as heart patients or candidates for reproductive technologies or plastic surgery (see McDonald, this volume). As ayurvedic and other remedies, treatments, and philosophies of the body are increasingly commodified and imported, they are becoming part and parcel of "local" models of health, healing, and personhood all over the world. Not only is the circulation of yoga and meditation, herbal medicine, reflexology, iridology, and a host of other treatments a striking marker of globalization, so too are the stresses and strains of neoliberalism being traced through newly embodied phenomena and diagnoses such as anorexia, depression and anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorders (Watters 2010). In short, neoliberal flexibility is not reducible to the restructuring of labor processes or the free-floating circulation of capital to rationalize and expand the parameters of the global assembly line, but has reached into the recesses of kinship (Stacey 1990), citizenship (Ong 1999), mind and body (Martin 1994; Walkerdine 2003) such that feeling and subjectivity itself is being constituted, managed, and experienced in new ways.

As noted above, the directive that one become an "entrepreneur of the self" – in which the individual is defined as a self-propelled, autonomous economic actor ever-responsive to a dynamic marketplace – has become central to the esprit of neoliberalism. The new entrepreneur of self is encouraged to seek introspection, self-mastery, and personal fulfillment in leisure and life as well as personal responsibility in the marketplace. The latter entails retraining and the procurement of new skills and networks as well as the imagination and courage to break outside of established channels of upward mobility. It also requires an interior dimension of selfhood and flexible self-making through enterprise in which capital accumulation is not an end in itself, but a means of reinvention. The reinvention takes hold of the person as producer, consumer, and citizen, as a social being as well as individual who cares for herself, her health, body, mind, and soul. Critiques of the flexibility-imperative and the "enterprise culture" of neoliberalism have emphasized the onus placed on the individual for economic viability as the state and private industries are exempt from providing the kinds of social support and welfare they once, in many contexts, were expected to offer. And in conjunction with these disciplinary techniques, a growing therapeutic culture has come to play a significant role in the affective refashioning of the neoliberal subject (Rose 1992). How these structural, economic and cultural transformations converge in conceiving the neoliberal subject is of critical ethnographic interest today (Richland 2009).

A striking dimension of the shifting expectations and contours of production, consumption, and self-making under neoliberalism is captured by the concept of immateriality – the growing fabrication and exchange not of tangible goods like sneakers or computer parts, but of information, ideas, and services (Hardt 1999; Lazzarato 1996, 2004). Indeed, an expanding terrain of immaterial, and in particular, affective, labor – labor in which affects are crucial to the provision of services, the substance of interactions rendered in the marketplace – lies at the heart of not only such visible circuits of contemporary global production but of the contemporary neoliberal *esprit*. This is

not to say that affective labor is a new phenomenon. One might say that prostitution and domestic service are expressions of its timeless (and highly gendered) forms. Analytically, however, it is in the era of post-Fordism that greater attention is now being turned to the particular nature of such immaterial labor. I want to examine such affective labor in the context of neoliberal entrepreneurialism by way of a return to two contributions of early feminist scholarship that have a direct bearing on these contemporary transformations – the relationship between reproductive and productive spheres of capitalism, and the gendering of labor itself.

Arlie Hochschild's groundbreaking *The Managed Heart* (1983) expanded C. Wright Mills's (1951) investigation of the "personality market" of white-collar occupations by examining not just the growing significance of emotion, demeanor, and personality in the white-collar marketplace, but also *the labor* entailed in the production of affects: as she said, labor that demands "one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (Hochschild 1983: 7). Today, the prominence of affective labor – the production of "a feeling of ease, well-being, satisfaction, excitement, passion" (Hardt 1999) across systems of exchange – occupies an ever-expanding dimension of labor and life more generally under neoliberalism. Affect, a form and practice of emotional reflexivity and intersubjectivity, transcends divisions of mind and body, reason and emotion (Weeks 2007).

How might we begin to grasp the convergences entailed in the new imperative of self-mastery / entrepreneurship and the expanding field of "affective labor" in which work and life are increasingly carried out? I take up the concept of affect in its broad reflexive sense, as signaled by Colleen and others like her in terms that are at once utilitarian and emotional, across realms of entrepreneurial, kin-based, intimate, and spiritual / therapeutic labor that have come to constitute their lives. The *work* of affect has historically been a sphere associated with women and subordinated classes and ethnic groups, a set of practices and sensibilities imbued with femininity and naturalized as such (Hochschild 1983: 164). Women the world over have also been concentrated in occupational fields in which affect-laden services are central – domestic service, nursing, teaching, sales, waitressing, sex-work, etc. But it is not just that women predominate in services that makes the gendering of these fields significant. It is the historic devaluation of such work ascribed a feminine value, whoever should carry it out, that bears examination as we enter an age in which immaterial work expands. Just as socialist-feminists several decades ago demonstrated the inextricable connections between feminine, *reproductive labor* (the unremunerated work typically consigned to the domestic arena, performed largely by women, and characterized as feminine) in relation to the masculinized *productive* sphere of remunerated work in the formal sector (e.g. Hartmann 1979; Rubin 1975), here I want to suggest that amid the growing affective economy, we re-examine the ways in which "feminized" affective labor of the private is increasingly critical to the waged economy, and how this reframes its "value." Such a re-examination challenges the recent suggestion that the rise of immateriality is marked by the "eclipse" of gender under late capitalism.

To consider the production of affect as an active form of labor (vs. a temperament or natural quality associated with femininity, for example) it is helpful to be reminded, then, of the skills and techniques this kind of work requires. Hochschild noted that these skills entail such techniques as "surface acting" (the mask actors and others put

on in order to feign an expected emotional demeanor) and "deep acting" (in which the individual so relates to the real or imagined state of another, that she conjures up deep emotional empathy or feeling with which to respond). These became critical tools with which flight attendants *managed* their emotions and their employer's demands that they retain an ever-pleasant, helpful, and friendly demeanor in their work. What is the difference between the requirement of affective labor demanded by one's corporate employer, as in Hochschild's flight attendants, and the demands as set by the clients of one's service occupation, as in Colleen's case? As Lazzarato noted, "the prescription and definition of tasks transforms into a prescription of subjectivities" (Lazzarato 1996: 135). And how (if at all) are these demands different from those labors enacted in the intimate / private spheres of children, extended kin, friends, domestic workers, fellow congregants, etc.? In essence, what are the relationships between public and private in which social actors such as Colleen increasingly enact their work and selves? In essence, a feminist interrogation of affect as a form of precarious, immaterial labor, is critical not only to highlight the ways in which gender can be central to such work, but also for its reminder of the inextricable relationship between *reproductive* and *productive* labor. And as Weeks makes clear, this entails thinking beyond a spatial separation between social reproduction and production. As we see with entrepreneurs such as Colleen, in realms of affective labor, not only must one examine the subsidies provided by non-remunerated reproductive work for the formal production of immaterial labor, but here the entanglements are even more complex. Indeed, the very affective substance of work (the exchanges of sentiments and care) and the subjectivities produced through this work, whether in "public" or "private," are increasingly similar.

Colleen's case reveals both the affective demands of emotional warmth and support that are integral to her wellness and team-building business, and the centrality of new modes of affect, new emotional contours she actively tries to foster in her life more generally, within her "partnership" marriage and her search for a spiritual / religious home. As the owner and producer of wellness-services, she coaches her customer / clients in self-esteem and physical fitness; she conveys to them warmth, encouragement, and individualized care. To produce these affects, she works to identify with their fears, their unease and inexperience using their bodies in challenging physical contexts. As the owner / creator of this enterprise, she is not accountable to a corporate manager or boss, but to her own expectations of the proper management of emotion and comportment entailed in good customer service. At the same time, her own emotional desires for support, comfort, intimacy shape her efforts to craft her new marriage in ways that depart from the relationship models that surrounded her in growing up. The demand for and capacity to produce these subjectivities and affects, therefore, emanate from both within herself, and as a requirement of the entrepreneurial enterprise she has created within the neoliberal milieu in which empathic, affective service is key. In striking contrast with the traditional hierarchies of bureaucratic occupational structures and the conventional patriarchal contours of middle-class marriage in Barbados, the crafting of these personalized and highly affective relationships constitute radical departures. Such transformations raise a number of intriguing questions about how a young woman such as Colleen comes to *learn* these forms of affective labor, if, as she herself suggests, they mark both a new and different generation / era and a new set of subjectivities. How would her

mother's life as a single mother raising three daughters, and her work as a domestic servant, have contained similar or different affects, and intertwining forms of affective labor? Are the American films and TV serials Colleen watches, the dub and calypso music she listens to providing cues for her new affective inclinations and middle-class, gendered subjectivities? Of course, just as Colleen modulates and manages her affect in her business, her marriage, and life more generally, so too did she frame her desires and interpretations of these changes in her ethnographic interviews with me in ways that reflect a savvy of the research enterprise, and many of the analytical themes I take up here in this chapter.

As scholars today are increasingly interested in domains of immaterial labor, one dimension that is too easily sidelined is Hochschild's central observation of *the gendering* of such labors as those hinging upon the exchange of affects. However, the shift in hiring men vs. women in formerly female-centered industries is not in itself evidence of receding tides of gender, not an ungendering as Salzinger notes (2003), but rather an implicit masculinization. Indeed, gendered qualities of workers, of bodies and temperaments, are invoked in locally specific ways. Poster notes that workers in the U.S. rely upon "nimble fingers" discourses emphasizing naturally embodied gender differences, whereas in India workers more often draw upon discourses about "dangerous spaces" and the threats posed by night work and the public sphere for respectable women (Poster 2001). Mirchandani documents that Indian call center workers (men and women) are "taught to emulate two roles during training programs to successfully provide customer service – mothering and servitude. "Mothering" involves listening carefully to customer needs and providing information in ways that boost customer self-confidence" (Mirchandani 2005: 111). Here, gender can be supple and slippery, as Mirchandani suggests, capable of hiding behind other social markers and segregating strategies such as race and nation, where feminization, "mothering," and the gender of subservience are simultaneously framed and reinforced under the rubric of neocolonialism. If affective labor has long been invisible to capitalist calculations of value by virtue of its apparently "natural" feminine qualities and close connections to the reproductive, unwaged arena, surely we ought to ask how today's heightened value associated with these forms of labor by capital, in turn, might challenge this invisibility and simultaneously produce new gendered performances and subjectivities. For the case of Colleen and many other new middle-class entrepreneurs like her shows us that it is not only the increasing entanglement between these spheres that is notable, but also the novel formulations of gender that are being called for. The gender of affective labor is becoming more flexible and adaptable. Women's efforts to cultivate both their own independent modes of femininity as well as new forms of emotional, intimate masculinity in their partners marks not only a shifting field of gendered subjectivities but also a significant component of their own affective labor. Just as recent works have amply demonstrated that the meanings and implications of current global restructuring and neoliberal reach across different cultural and political geographies are resonant but far from generic (Dunn 2004; Ong 2006; Richland 2009), likewise, the significance of affective labor in everyday life and work is equally particular, and in flux. I want to suggest that in their particularities, as explored in a place like Barbados, we might find new clues for how neoliberalism *works* and *feels* and, in so doing, imagine new possibilities for ways of being and becoming.

## The Spirit of Neoliberalism: Entrepreneurship and the Particularities of Culture

Eva Illouz offers the evocative concept of "emotional capitalism" to describe the conditions of late capitalism in the United States, where "the cultural persuasions of therapy, economic productivity, and feminism intertwined and enmeshed with one another, providing the rationale, the methods and the moral impetus to extract emotions from the realm of inner life and put them at the center of selfhood and sociability in the form of a cultural model that has become widely pervasive…" (Illouz 2007: 36). However, by looking closely at a place like Barbados, we can see just how historically and culturally bound such a model is. For Barbados shares no such melding of traditions of therapy and liberal feminism, no parallel figure of the "normally neurotic middle-class" and no equivalent language of affect in local discourse. In this context emotions and understandings of personhood and "the self" have historically been read as manifestations of the structural building blocks of Caribbean society: kinship, race, and class. Within popular discourse, apart from the local newspaper's "Dear Christine" help column, emotions and affective relations have been the preserve, as one entrepreneur told me, of "the priest or the bottle." Colleen said she was taught, "women should be in church every Sunday and we shouldn't party, nor should we drink, nor should we either consider smoking. Those were not things that were considered ladylike. It didn't matter that you were hurting, you were told to grin and bear…you grin and you bear, and that's it."

While it is true today that neoliberal Barbados might be read as a veritable field of affect and affective labor, reminiscent of patterns witnessed elsewhere in the world, these current forms emerge out of different pasts, and are taken up in a different key. Whereas de Tocqueville and Schumpeter equated economic adventurism and entrepreneurship with the essence of American Protestant culture, scholars and government leaders of Barbados have bemoaned the historical absence of precisely this entrepreneurial ethic, due to the weight of plantation slavery and the dominance of colonial bureaucratic culture. Likewise, the manifestations of what we will call a new spirit of neoliberalism, though easily subject to the "déjà vu" experience of world travel today, must be interpreted through the prism of historical particularity. As we will see, entrepreneurialism and the rise in therapeutic culture, for instance, is often filtered through religion, either institutionally (through a range of new churches and alternative congregations) or through practices that infuse subtle Christian messages and teachings. Indeed, religion itself is an important vehicle for propagating the entrepreneurial spirit, and marriage becomes a critical medium through which to experiment with a melding of new affective labors and desires.

In Barbados, the pursuit of entrepreneurship and the figure of the entrepreneur hold contradictory meanings. On one hand, entrepreneurship has signified the grit and economic survival for the Afro-Barbadian majority, especially symbolized by the rural higgler who embodies the strength and fortitude of women whose active trade and fierce determination has anchored the region's internal marketing system. On the other hand, entrepreneurship has been associated with white nepotistic privilege and the belief that despite black control over the island's independent political system, a small handful of families retain control of the economy. Today's entrepreneurs challenge many of these associations, both demographically and in terms of symbolic

meanings. Women and men, white as well as black, from lower- and middle-class backgrounds, now eagerly embrace the entrepreneurial mission as innovators in the new economy. Their trajectories challenge traditional trajectories of education, class, and occupation. As many of my informants over the age of 50 told me, business in their youth "was for the dummies who couldn't make it at school," however, today, business is what status and mobility are all about. The recent decline of the island's sugar industry, the economic backbone of the Island for some 300 years; a precarious global marketplace of tourism and off-shore services; and the retrenchment of the Civil Service, the country's largest employer, have together propelled entrepreneurship to the forefront of the state's hopeful vision for economic growth. Today countless government-sponsored and NGO-supported programs exist for the encouragement of entrepreneurship: in schools, summer camps, youth groups and for existing business people as well as people who are contemplating self-employment and business enterprise. In short, entrepreneurship has become not just a new profile for the nation's economic future, but also, I want to suggest, a framework for a new Barbadian selfhood.

Hailed as the Caribbean region's "success story," Barbados is known for being the most "middle-class" and "developed" of all the Caribbean islands, occupying the Human Development Index's 37th position just below the Czech Republic and preceding Malta. The Government of Barbados has recently produced a ten-year National Development Plan in which entrepreneurship and the embodiment of a culture of neoliberalism resound. The plan states repeatedly that amid today's challenging economic times Barbadians must cultivate an explicitly "entrepreneurial culture," a "more open-minded, innovative, creative, entrepreneurial outlook" (Government of Barbados 2007: 36). Confronting the precariousness of the current global economy entails a vigilant protection of "certain core cultural values" and necessitates certain innovations and changes, prime among them, as the document indicates, the creation of "an entrepreneurial society." The strategic goals outlined in the plan are saturated in a language of neoliberalism – flexibility, innovation, and the self-conscious articulation of a Barbadian "brand." While the Plan's proposed advances are always contextualized amid the unpredictable tides of the global economy, it also cautions against the penetration of outside (i.e. American) values, especially those of materialism and consumerism (2007: 17).

The shifting capitalist emphasis from large centralized industries and bureaucratic hierarchy to a market-driven model of enterprise and individual responsibility is echoed not only in the realm of labor and capital but also in emerging therapeutic and spiritual domains, and the two are increasingly intermingled. In Barbados, as in many other countries, the traditional hierarchy of the mainline churches and a relationship with the divine as mediated through priests and bishops is shifting to one in which individuals express highly reflexive relationships to God, having been spoken to directly by the Almighty, and "allowing him to guide" their actions in everyday life. In both organizational structure and in the content of "prosperity" sermons – the encouragement to "grab what is yours" and a spirit of neoliberalism resounds. As one leading preacher told me, "The entrepreneurial spirit is… in my personal belief, a god-inspired wonderful thing … I feel there is a great link between faith and business. True faith translates into tangible change around you … God wants successful business people to be a light – people admire successful business people so they have a platform

to speak the message of Christ. [In days gone by] professional people were looked at as the gurus; today it's the business people and the athletes – and these are speaking out their faith."

Early in my fieldwork, religion and/or "faith in God" emerged prominently in discussions with diverse entrepreneurs as they traced their entrepreneurial journeys and the various challenges faced along the way. I began hearing about unfamiliar churches, some with charismatic pastors, others more loosely organized in people's homes. Certainly anyone familiar with Caribbean culture and societies would not be surprised to find the prominence of religion in Barbadian life, and the recent census makes clear that the Anglican church, though appealing less to many of these middle-class entrepreneurs, still represents the largest single religious group (70,705 of 250,000 or 28 percent) of the nation, divided relatively evenly between women and men. However, Pentecostals now constitute the next largest group, 19 percent of the population (7 percent of all men and 11 percent of all women), and from all accounts those numbers are on the rise here, as they are in North America, Latin America, and Africa (Government of Barbados 2007: 180–183; Harrison 2005; New York Times 2005). A striking number of entrepreneurs, both black and white, men and women describe for me their recent migrations from the "stiff," hierarchical, and formal qualities of the churches of their upbringing (Catholic, Anglican, etc.) and their newfound pleasure and comfort in these newer churches with charismatic pastors, popular music, and "modern" style of participation in living room "cells" or other intimate venues. Over the past decade, I have come to see that this appeal has many facets – from the practical and strategic to the spiritual – in which entrepreneurship itself plays a key role. One entrepreneur observed this new trend of "born-again" businesswomen among educated middle classes, saying, in Barbados "God is now cool."

Like the mega-churches in North America, these new institutions offer a wide array of services, workshops, and groups geared to everything from marriage counseling and nurturing a safe (celibate) teenage culture, to business-oriented seminars aimed at marketing and "team-building" with an explicitly Christian theme. Further, the very shape of these new churches and the way in which they are tailored to individual needs reflect the enterprise culture of these neoliberal times. For many entrepreneurs, religion frames a more hidden but no less significant aspect of their business orientation, whether offering psychotherapy or reflexology with Christian references or in understanding faith as a private reservoir of support, motivation, and healing that might be enacted through vigorous physical exercises, yoga, or meditation. Whatever its form, the desire for personalized care and individualized meaning is unmistakable. As Colleen describes her decision to leave her former church and seek out a smaller, more intimate one, "I wanted that when a preacher was saying something and I didn't agree I could put my hand up and say, 'excuse me.' I need to be in an environment where … I'm really in-tuned with what's happening and where I do have a say and I'm counted as a member, not just my pocket."

The entrepreneurial enterprise, and, for Colleen, the simultaneous entrepreneurial project of the self, hinge in large part upon both the production and consumption of affects. Such affects are "social experiences in solution" (New York Times 2005), circulating within an economy that envelopes and gives new shape to social relationships and the very inclination to examine, think, and feel *oneself*. This swirl of affects is especially visible and pronounced for middle-class women like Colleen who are concentrated as

both producers and consumers across an expanding landscape of service-enterprises as they simultaneously retain responsibility for the management of domestic life and kin-work. Whether in the growing arena of body work (massage, acupuncture, and various "aesthetic treatments" for hair, skin, nails, diet, nutrition, etc.) and other therapeutic services geared toward psychological and physical dimensions of health (from personal trainers to "life-coaches"), to those enterprises aimed at less explicitly personal but equally individualized services such as business consulting, design, and event planning, their work increasingly entails the performance and exchange of affects.

Until recently, the treatment of psychological or psychiatric ailments was consigned largely to severe cases of psychosis and / or substance abuse, and contained within the ominous walls of "the mad house" (Stewart 2007: 2). Today a new and burgeoning arena of therapies and treatments related to holistic well-being and personal individual growth, and to building healthy relationships among couples and families has emerged almost from thin air. The individuals, relationships, and families conjured in these new arenas are themselves novel in the Barbadian context. For example, classes on parenting geared toward a nuclear family, and couples therapy emphasizing intimate and caring communication for the conjugal couple as a social entity, have no precursors. Indeed, these emphases contrast with a long West Indian tradition in which the "family" referred to an extended kin network and the enduring center of both affective and material support, where social life was predominantly gender segregated, and where "the couple" has been a fluid bond.

Today, the Barbados phone directory lists an array of new psychological services, ranging from developmental assessments, treatment for autistic spectrum disorders, behaviour management, family therapy, marriage counselling and training, and even corporate counselling. Not unsurprisingly, today one finds more common reference than in the past to "depression," "anxiety," "panic attacks," as well as to "counseling" and "therapy," in the everyday lexicon of middle-class Barbadian parlance. In many instances a blending of religion and therapy is explicit; for instance, practitioners highlight "spiritual counseling" or "faith-based treatment" in their ads, and churches offer activities melding aesthetic, therapeutic and spiritual experiences, pastoral hypnotherapies, and metaphysical services. It is hard to overemphasize just what a radical departure from tradition these new services and realms of affective experience are, when they sound so familiar, so ordinary in the American vernacular. Where the dual practice of *obeah* (witchcraft) and biomedicine has long been noted in the Afro-Caribbean, the practice of talk-therapy and open acknowledgement of psychological illness have been largely invisible. For the most part, the old Barbadian adage, "all skin teeth ain't a smile" has signaled the power of hiding one's true feelings under the veneer of social propriety, and, as Colleen said, the ethic of "grin and bear" summed up where one's emotions belonged. In a formerly slave-based plantation society, whose current economy depends upon tourism, the capacity for veiling one's feelings, acting hospitable, friendly, welcoming signifies a culture long experienced in the management of affects. As the forms of these affective labors shift into new domains of market-based services and are simultaneously heightened within the intimate recesses of the *non-market* economy, we are challenged to employ new analytical tools, including some longstanding feminist ones, to make sense of these articulations, and to interpret them within their historical and cultural particularity. The meanings of selfhood and

kinship, and the affective field in which these relationships and subjectivities are enacted are shifting in the current neoliberal milieu. Just as Hochschild notes among foreign domestic workers that new modes of sentiment and love can be produced in the context of their paid care work of American children that are then transformative of their own kinship relations back home, so too might we read the dialectics of affect between entrepreneurial and domestic spheres (Hochschild 2003).

The entrepreneur as innovator, broker, and consumer of neoliberal practices illustrates not only the inextricable relationship between production and consumption within advanced capitalism, but also highlights the particular nature of the neoliberal economy, a field of affect in which the performance of affective labor and the pursuit of affective experience – the feeling of comfort, nurturance, love, intimacy, for example – makes plain the impossibility of separating out "reproductive" from "productive" labor, imagining one or the other outside the grasp of capital's logics, or endorsing Jameson's (1991) early claims of postmodernity's inevitable "waning of the affect" at large.

As we see in the case of Colleen, these transformations take hold across all fields making up her life. Her determination to break with old fashioned patriarchal marriage traditions and her efforts to foster a new intimate partnership instead, her shifting the focus of her business to address the physical and emotional stresses and strains of people's everyday lives, and her own spiritual journey all mark these new trajectories and their inextricable connections. Her own "personal path toward wellness" and the re-orientation of her business reveal an intricate affective intermingling of neoliberal restructuring and self-management. For Colleen, entrepreneurial success in the form of wealth alone makes her unhealthy, exhausted, and feeling at sea. To restore her mind and body to health, she has to reinvent herself as an economic agent. Her participation in the marketplace is reoriented and imbued with affective, spiritual rebirth; bodily and psychological wellness brings her peace achieved in part through the redesign of her economic enterprise. Here, the Weberian paradigm linking economic orientation and religious conditioning is helpful but the relationship has proceeded onto another stage.

The deepening of a neoliberal cultural economy, and, in particular, the rising tide of the entrepreneurial imperative we are witnessing in Barbados is not only rewriting the landscape of occupation and class, but also signifies a shifting cultural field in which the social order (kinship, marriage, parenting, religion, class status) is in flux. At the heart of Barbadian neoliberal culture today is the rising importance of self-examination and the production of a more flexible, fit, happier, and better self whose emotional center is fulfilled not merely through success in conventional terms of economy and material security. For women entrepreneurs in particular, the importance of affective labor in their businesses resonates closely with the emotional labors they perform in their private, domestic lives.

## Affective Labors in "Public" and "Private"

As with other entrepreneurial women in Barbados, for Colleen, fashioning a new kind of marriage has been an integral part of her entrepreneurial venture, her project of self-making, and the affective orbit in which both unfold. She describes her husband through a new vision of Barbadian masculinity and intimate "partnership":

> …on that very first night I told (him) about my goals and what I really wanted for my life and I was really passionate about it and even before … we got married I shared with him the whole process of wanting to own my own business, and even to make the decision to go away to study, I mean he supported me a hundred percent on that. He said, "you know, you need to go for it…" unlike my previous boyfriend who would be like, "well you … you just can't go and leave me" a … a … a … a … like, get over it honey … With the previous boyfriend I also wanted to make sure that I kept on to the relationship and that became a bit of a tug-a-war … so going into this relationship I knew more of what I wanted and being able to share that upfront with him and say, "look, you know I want to do these things, I need to know I'm gonna have your support" and he's just been that continuously. I mean, even with the project, when we got the land, we were there *working together* umm … I mean we planted those bananas *together*, … it was just us. But yet he knew when he needed to give me my space, and just support that effort … He's been really supportive … our relationship has been fantastic and I'm not just saying that…

Colleen describes the "emotional effort" and the "production" of emotional satisfaction that lie at the core of what she desires her marriage to be, just as she and other women entrepreneurs describe the nuances of affective labor central to the success of their businesses: the attentiveness to individual desires; the depth of knowledge of and appreciation for a client's history, family, and taste; and the responsiveness to mood and emotional state, especially for those involved in delivering services. In their marriages, and intimate relationships women's affective labor – the "keeping house" and cooking and shopping with an eye to their loved ones' tastes and needs, their soothing and listening, planning and caring – does more than simply subsidize the realm of material production and reproduce the labor force. Their performance of the labor of affect, like most other forms of labor, is multi-dimensional, experienced as both labor and love, duty and desire, burden and pleasure. As a form of labor and a production of value that crosses over between business and home, public and private spheres, this work of affect is increasingly critical to the growing expectations for "intensive motherhood," "companionate" or "partnership" marriages, the cultivation of entrepreneurial selves, and of course to the fueling of an agile, flexible neoliberal economy more generally in which affect-laden service plays an ever-increasing role. The importance of affective labor in the home is especially pronounced among middle-class women, who, as Jones has observed in the Indonesian context, often rely heavily upon paid domestic workers for a great deal of physical household labor, and thus imbue "emotional labor" with the "currency of middle class familial relationships" (Jones 2004: 510).

For new entrepreneurs like Colleen, husbands / partners often offer invaluable help and encouragement and are indispensible to their entrepreneurial successes. When Colleen describes her husband as her "partner," it is not just the back-office and accounting support he provides her in her business to which she refers, but to his ability to read her mood, anticipate her emotional needs, and "really *be* there," traits she most values and depends upon.

As such, the gender of affective labor is becoming more flexible as women entrepreneurs rework understandings of middle-class femininity to fit their entrepreneurial pursuits, and as a new Bajan masculinity is increasingly called for that prioritizes intimate and shared leisure, and that embraces an egalitarian partnership in which emotional and material support are intertwined. These newly fashioned gendered possibilities are reflected in a remapping of public space that were traditionally male

dominated; in this context rum shops and sports bars make room for family friendly "cafes" and intimate wine bars that dot the new coastal "board-walk." Such spaces are inhabitable not only by new companionate couples, but by others, including women alone or with children and friends.

A close reading of interview narratives with over 100 entrepreneurs reveals a resounding concern with "support," "comfort," "security," and "care" as integral to Barbadian women's highly charged project of middle-class self-making. Affects are signalled, often in utilitarian terms, through statements about the degree to which a spouse, friend, or relation is helpful, "steps in with the children," "makes sacrifices" economically or through volunteering time and skills to the business or on the home-front. These expressions of affect tie the domestic and the public, the unwaged and remunerated together. These forms of care have become critical to women's search for new kinds of relationships they wish to build with their spouses, and new ways to express nurturance of their children, kin, friends, community, and self. It is these expressions of care and consideration that Colleen and many other women identify as the crux of their intimate relationships, their manner of managing staff, *and their business success*.

The concept of affective labor is critical in simultaneously capturing not just the inextricable linkages between ostensibly separate productive (masculine) and reproductive (feminine) spheres of work, but the reflexive emotional dimensions of productive, income-generating work and other dimensions of middle-class life, social relations, and selfhood, and the *labor* of what has been taken for granted and naturalized as (feminine) affect, love, thoughtfulness, and care in the realms of kinship, conjugality, etc. As such, affective labor not only bridges old divisions of reproductive / productive labor but highlights the ways in which so-called "private" and public spheres are simultaneously and mutually saturated in affective exchanges that can at one and the same time be imbued with caring and intimacy, and also be subject to alienation. While actively shaping the tastes and desires of one's children, spouse and customers may not at first glance seem akin to the labor and skill of manufacturing of an engine or performing other conventionally productive work, the degree to which these affect-laden labors are shared or become their sole responsibility is one critical tension that permeates the narratives of the women entrepreneurs. When we see private life, and the work of social reproduction as sites of labor – whether by paid domestic workers, unpaid kin, or both – the dialectic of productive / reproductive labor crystallizes By training our eye solely on the observable mechanisms of capitalist production and accumulation we have missed such practices and preoccupations in the past. And if in the rush to capture the new articulations of immaterial, affective labor, we resist this very dialectic, our analyses will be equally partial.

I am not alone in urging a more integrated analysis or a more rigorously gendered reading of affective labor (Schultz 2006; Weeks 2007). An ethnographic window into new middle-class entrepreneurs in Barbados suggests not merely that affective labor performed in the domestic domain offers a critical subsidy to the formal, "productive" sphere of capitalism, as socialist feminists have long noted. Indeed, the entrepreneurial realm for women is not merely a realm of productive work in the conventional sense that it is tied to the extractive, remunerative sphere of economy. For this sphere leaks into and grabs hold of all other dimensions of life including the domestic and private spheres, both spatially and otherwise. Entrepreneurs frequently have home

offices, operate portions of their work from home, and rely upon intimate partners and kin for help (paid and otherwise) in their businesses. These relationships, in turn, and the affects through which they are forged and maintained, are simultaneously reconfiguring the contours of gender (urging new modes of emotional masculinity, and making possible alternative femininities, for example). Meanwhile, domestic and affective relationships also root themselves within their entrepreneurial endeavors such that kin, friends, lovers, children, and others within personal social networks become inextricably bound up with their businesses. And, as the very essence of the labor in many new spheres of the economy takes an affective form, it not only mirrors, but is supported, sustained, and subsidized by affects formerly contained within private, non-market relations.

How far these intertwining labors seem from Marx's premise of the separation of public and private spheres that was central to his notion of estranged or alienated labor. "The worker therefore only feels himself outside his work, and in his work feels outside himself. He is at home when he is not working, and when he is working he is not at home … As a result, therefore, man (the worker) no longer feels himself to be freely active in any but his animal functions – eating, drinking, procreating, or at most in dwelling and in dressing-up, etc.; and in his human functions he no longer feels himself to be anything but an animal." The entrepreneurial "selves" of Colleen and many others bear no such separations; seldom do they leave their work behind when they are "at home," and equally typically are they juggling the affective labor of their families, partners, and social networks in the course of conducting their businesses. These very preoccupations and affective labors become inextricable from their affective skills and subjectivities at work. Such affective exchanges are not only integral to the conduct of many of their service enterprises in the marketplace – in offering individualized care and concern, insight, personal rapport, memory – they are also fueled by and in competition with those affects exchanged outside the market, in life and through relationships more broadly.

To emphasize the many dimensions of affective labor enacted simultaneously in new realms of religious and therapeutic practice, in new middle-class entrepreneurial ventures, and in intimate relationships such as new middle-class partnership marriages is to illustrate precisely Kathi Weeks' claim that "what could once perhaps have been imagined as an 'outside' is now more fully 'inside'; social reproduction can no longer be usefully identified with a particular site, let alone imagined as a sphere insulated from capital's logics" (Weeks 2007: 238). And further, capital's logics bear increasingly "private" expressions. It is in this seepage between what have long been conceptualized as distinguishable, often subsidizing but seemingly separable reproductive / productive, private / public spheres that we find gender being flexibly and affectively re-worked, new subjectivities in formation, and along with new stresses and strains, new forces of alienation. And here amid the particulars of culture we find new sets of questions for a feminist critical analysis and the ethnographic pursuit of the neoliberal.

## Acknowledgments

I wish to thank Fran Mascia Lees, patient and generous editor extraordinaire, and Gul Ozegin, Robert Goddard, Joanna Davidson, and Cindi Katz, my ongoing interlocutors

in the field of affective labor, without whom this essay would not exist. The fieldwork on which this essay draws was generously funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation, and by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation's MARIAL Center, at Emory University.

## REFERENCES

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1998 The Essence of Neo-Liberalism. Le Monde Diplomatique. http://mondediplo.com/1998/12/08bourdieu, accessed November 16, 2010.

Dunn, Elizabeth C., 2004 Privatizing Poland: Baby Food, Big Business, and the Remaking of Labor. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Ehrenreich, Barbara, and Arlie Hochschild, 2003 Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy. New York: Metropolitan Books.

Freeman, Carla, 2007 The "Reputation" of Neo-liberalism. American Ethnologist 34: 252–267.

Freeman, Carla, n.d. Remaking Middle-Class Respectability: Entrepreneurial Marriage in a Neoliberal Caribbean.

Giddens, Anthony, 1991 Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Government of Barbados, 2007 National Strategic Plan 2006–2025. Bridgetown: Research and Planning Unit, Economic Affairs Division, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Development.

Hardt, Michael, 1999 Affective Labor. boundary *2* 26(2): 89–100.

Harrison, Milmon F., 2005 Righteous Riches: The World of Faith Movement in Contemporary African American Religion. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hartmann, Heidi I., 1979. The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union. Capital and Class 3(2) (January 1): 1–33. doi:10.1177/030981687900800102.

Harvey, David, 2005 A Brief History of Neoliberalism. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hochschild, Arlie, 1983 The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hochschild, Arlie, 2003. Love and Gold. *In* Global Woman: Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy. Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Hochschild, eds. pp. 15–30. New York: Metropolitan Books.

Illouz, Eva, 2007 Cold Intimacies: The Making of Emotional Capitalism. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Jameson, Fredric, 1991 Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Jones, Carla, 2004 Whose Stress? Emotion Work in Middle-Class Javanese Homes. Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology 69(4) (December): 509–528. doi:10.1080/0014184042000302326.

Lan, Pei-Chia, 2006 Global Cinderellas: Migrant Domestics and Newly Rich Employers in Taiwan. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Lazzarato, M., 1996 Immaterial Labor. *In* Radical Thought in Italy: A Potential Politics. Paolo Virno and Michael Hardt, eds. pp. 133–150. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Lazzarato, M., 2004 From Capital-Labour to Capital-Life. ephemera 4(3): 187–208.

Liechty, Mark, 2003 Suitably Modern: Making Middle-Class Culture in a New Consumer Society. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Martin, Emily, 1994 Flexible Bodies: Tracking Immunity in American Culture from the Days of Polio to the Age of AIDS. Boston: Beacon.

Marx, Karl, 1978 The Marx–Engels Reader. Robert C. Tucker, ed. 2nd edition. New York: Norton.

Meyer, Birgit, 2004 Christianity in Africa: From African Independent to Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches. Annual Review of Anthropology 33(1) (10): 447–474. doi:10.1146/annurev.anthro.33.070203.143835.

Mills, C. (Charles Wright), 1951 White Collar; The American Middle Classes. New York: Oxford University Press.

Mirchandani, Kirin, 2004 Practices of Global Capital: Gaps, Cracks and Ironies in Transnational Call Centres in India. Global Networks 4: 355–373.

Mirchandani, Kirin, 2005 Gender Eclipsed? Racial Hierarcies in Transnational Call Center Work. Social Justice 32(4): 105–119.

New York Times, 2005 Class Matters. First Paperback. Times Books, September 2, 2005.

Ong, Aihwa, 1999 Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Ong, Aihwa, 2006 Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Parreñas, Rhacel Salazar, 2001 Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration and Domestic Work. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Poster, Winifred, 2001 Dangerous Places and Nimble Fingers: Discourses of Gender Discrimination and Rights in Global Corporations. International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society 15, no. 1: 77–105.

Pun, Ngai, 2005 Made in China: Women Factory Workers in a Global Workplace. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Richland, Justin B., 2009 On Neoliberalism and Other Social Diseases: The 2008 Sociocultural Anthropology Year in Review. American Anthropologist 111(2) (June): 170–176. doi:10.1111/j.1548-1433.2009.01110.x.

Rose, Nikolas, 1992 Governing the Enterprising Self. *In* The Values of the Enterprise Culture: The Moral Debate. Paul Hellas and Paul Morris, eds. pp. 141–164. London: Routledge.

Rubin, Gayle, 1975 The Traffic in Women: Notes on the "Political Economy" of Sex. *In* Toward an Anthropology of Women. Rayna R. Reiter, ed. pp. 157–210. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Salzinger, Leslie, 2003 Genders in Production: Making Workers in Mexico's Global Factories. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Schielke, Samuli, n.d. Living in the Future Tense.

Schultz, Susanne, 2006 Dissolved Boundaries and "Affective Labor": On the Disappearance of Reproductive Labor and Feminist Critique in Empire. Capitalism Nature Socialism 17(1): 77. doi:10.1080/10455750500505473.

Stacey, Judith, 1990 Brave New Families: Domestic Upheaval in Late Twentieth Century America. New York: Basic Books.

Stewart, Kathleen, 2007 Ordinary Affects. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Walkerdine, Valerie, 2003 Reclassifying Upward Mobility: Femininity and the Neo-liberal Subject. Gender and Education 15: 237–248.

Watters, Ethan, 2010 Crazy Like Us: The Globalization of the American Psyche. New York: Free Press, Simon and Schuster.

Weeks, Kathi, 2007 Life Within and Against Work: Affective Labor, Feminist Critique and Post-Fordist Politics. ephemera: Theory & Politics in Organization 7(1): 233–249.

# CHAPTER 21 PAIN
## *Pain and Bodies*

*Jean E. Jackson*

### INTRODUCTION

The topic of pain offers a treasure trove of anthropological research projects that pose intriguing intellectual challenges. To begin with an obvious point, pain, especially chronic pain, is a hugely important issue: 40 percent of patients seeking medical attention cite pain as the reason; approximately 45 percent of people will experience chronic pain at some point during their lives (Taylor 2006: 237); an estimated 86 million Americans have some form of chronic pain (Sullivan 2007: 263); and over US $100 billion is spent yearly in treatment-related costs and lost-work productivity due to chronic pain (Sullivan 2007: 268). Also, pain medicine intersects in complex, anthropologically fascinating ways with powerful institutions like the insurance and pharmaceutical industries, and government. Another reason to encourage more research is that new insights emerging from social science investigations can potentially ameliorate the distress experienced by pain sufferers and those around them.

Academic disciplines studying pain range from psychophysics and biomedical engineering all the way to philosophy. Although a great deal of behavioral and clinical social science research on pain has appeared, sociology and anthropology have paid relatively little attention to the topic. Yet, given the truism that the best locations for understanding a society are the sites where things don't work, pain's invisibility and ontological and epistemic uncertainty offer fertile terrain for anthropological investigation.

Various paradoxes coalesce around pain, "one of the most controversial areas in neuroscience… rife with philosophical problems" (Aydede and Guzeldere 2002: S266). For example, while pain is conventionally seen as aversive and unwanted, biologically speaking, pain is indispensable. Pain warns of injury or organ malfunction, and helps heal a wound by motivating the individual to tend to and protect the

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

site. Many textbooks on pain begin by describing the extremely unhappy lives of those rare individuals born with a congenital inability to feel pain. Pain medicine plays with this contradiction: one book is titled *Pain: The Gift Nobody Wants* (Brand and Yancey 1993), and one article's title is "When good pain turns bad" (Watkins and Maier 2003).

Both an aspect of mind (experience) and brain (produced by neurological structures and processes), pain illustrates some of the problems associated with mind–body dualism. Murat Aydede and Guven Guzeldere note that the "fundamental tension between what can be quantified as the 'objective' measure of pain as characterized in terms of tissue damage and the 'subjective' criterion of when to categorize a given experience as pain is in fact prevalent in pain research" (2002: S267). Medical science's traditional definition of pain as sensation provides an example. Francis Keefe and Christopher France's definition, "a sensory event warning of tissue damage or illness" (Keefe and France 1999: 137) nicely elides the nature of that warning; while pain is certainly a sensation, its bedrock meaning – and what distinguishes it from nonpainful sensations – is aversiveness, which, being an emotion, does not fit within biomedicine's underlying biologistic foundational premises (see Kleinman 1995: 27–34). Another example: although emotions are always embodied (this is precisely what distinguishes them from cognitions), because we tend to see emotions as an aspect of "the mind," the body's fundamental role in emotions is often obscured, phrases like "heartbroken" notwithstanding.

Joanna Kempner notes that biomedicine has the cultural authority to define what is biological and therefore natural (Kempner 2006: 633). However, it is also true that, because everyone has had pain, including serious pain (for instance, childbirth pain), we all can speak authoritatively about it. Interesting gaps are found between pain as conceptualized by neuroscience and ordinary, "folk" notions (which includes clinical medicine; see Chapman et al. 2000: 217). For example, neurosurgeon John Loeser asks, "Does anyone really believe that a tooth is capable of hurting? Or a back?" (Loeser 1991: 215). Yes indeed, Dr Loeser: pain sufferers (and, for the most part, their primary physicians) see backs and teeth as precisely where pain happens, not the central nervous system, which is, ironically, the precise location being referred to when a given pain is dismissed as being "unreal," "imaginary," "all in his head."

Any anthropological discussion of pain will sooner or later depart from the biomedical model because so many dimensions of pain lie outside, or at the extreme margins, of medicine. A given pain's meaning derives from an individual's history and environment. Pain of necessity remains poorly formulated until it is located in a time and a cultural space – the immediate context of a pain experience and the myriad less proximate factors that shape it. These include sex and gender (Garro 1992; Kempner 2006; Whelan 2003), social class, ethnicity (Trnka 2007), prior experiences with pain, family history, and so forth (see, for example, Good et al. 1992). Moreover, although biomedically and conventionally pain is seen as a property of an individual, in fact it is deeply intersubjective. The experiential world of a pain sufferer will be significantly shaped by persons participating in that world, a point made by Wittgenstein some time ago (also see Das 1997; Kleinman et al. 1992).

A given pain's meaning is the most significant determinant of the pain experience, and a major reason why pain (particularly chronic pain) may not be proportional to tissue damage. Indeed, the experience "may be totally unrelated to the physical

parameters of intensity and to the duration of the 'pain-producing' nociceptive stimulus" (Tracey 2005: 127). One of the most famous demonstrations of this fact is Henry Beecher's report on soldiers wounded on the Anzio battlefield in the Second World War. Because their injuries represented a ticket home with honor, requests for pain medication were significantly fewer than would be expected (Beecher 1946).

There are numerous studies of pain in other cultures, but as their topics, aims, and methodologies vary extensively it is difficult to draw generalizations. Space limitations prevent me from discussing the cross-cultural literature in any comprehensive fashion. The variety of studies is apparent in the following randomly selected list of published accounts: ballet dancers' pain in the Netherlands; infibulated refugee Somali women; Indo-Fijian women's pain discourses; the role of pain in a particular martial arts practice in Israel; childbirth pain in India. With respect to anthropological research in the U.S., only a few extended studies exist (Bates 1996; Corbett 1986; Greenhalgh 2001). Well-known work by sociologists includes Baszanger 1998, Hilbert 1984, Kotarba 1983, Zbrowski 1969 and Zola 1966.

Pain of various kinds occupies center stage in much of the West's cultural production, and the symbolics of pain offers an endless set of possible research topics in the humanities (see, for example, Morris 1991, 1994). As Kempner notes, "pain offers a tabula rasa on which to inscribe our most fundamental cultural ideas about suffering" (Kempner 2006: 636; also see Scarry 1985). As with bodies in general, the painful body simultaneously produces and is produced by culture, reflecting and reproducing it. Pain is a powerful and productive metaphor. Given that the body is the main source of metaphors of order and disorder (Turner 1991), we can confidently state that pain is the quintessential symbol of disorder – one could argue that death is more orderly than pain. As Chris Eccleston et al., paraphrasing William Arney and Bernard Bergen (1983), state, "Pain can only make sense for those directly involved in it as an index of disequilibrium. Such disequilibrium and disorder are threatening to both patient and physician. This is a disorder which invites and demands resolution." They note that attempts to stabilize the disequilibrium only "provide opportunities for repeated failure" (Eccleston et al. 1997: 707). Exceptions to such a sweeping assertion do exist, but they emerge only after pain's meaning has traveled a considerable distance from the conventional one, most often toward a conceptualization of pain as "good" in some way. For example, if pain becomes the means to a sought-after end, say, redemption, one can say pain has restored order. Another example is Jeremy Bentham's assertion that pain governs individual lives much as a sovereign power governs a state, ruling us when we feel pain and even when we do not, thus providing stability to our lives (cited in Morris 1994: 8).

The protean nature of pain perhaps partly explains why it has not received the anthropological attention it deserves. According to Arthur Kleinman, pain "eludes the discipline's organized explanatory systems as much as it escapes the diagnostic net of biomedical categories" (Kleinman 1992: 170). But these very same reasons provide a potential researcher with a promising site in American medicine "where the relations of power and professional knowledge and the potential for exploitation residing in power relations are unusually visible" (Kleinman et al. 1992: 6).

This essay discusses the areas of pain research and treatment of most interest to anthropology. The next section looks at recent neurological research on pain, including the profound impact of neuroimaging technologies. A brief discussion of some

clinical considerations follows. A section on the biopsychosocial approach to chronic pain treatment comes next, followed by a brief section on language and pain, and then conclusions. Note that the body is problematized throughout, but for the most part implicitly.

## Neurological Approaches to Pain

The International Association for the Study of Pain provides a widely used definition of pain: "an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage, or described in terms of such damage" (1979: S217). Yet despite this presumably authoritative definition, debates over how to conceptualize pain continue to appear (see Baszanger 1998; Thernstrom 2010). As already noted, one source of difference stems from whether pain is being seen as aversive experience (grounding it in emotion and mind) or as a nociceptive event involving a noxious stimulus triggering electrochemical impulses that register as pain in the central nervous system.

The distinction made between physical and emotional pain, so seemingly necessary, commonsensical even, is "a myth" (Morris 1994: 23). Neurologist Howard Fields states that,

> …what most people call mental, or emotional pain is ontologically identical to what they call organic, physical or bodily pain. This point is counter-intuitive and failure to appreciate it has compounded the confusion about the nature of pain. Once this point is appreciated, many confusing phenomena, such as the placebo response, somatization, psychologically induced headache, and analgesia in trance, become less surprising and arcane (Fields 2007: 43).

Harold Merskey, another eminent pain researcher, agrees: pain "is monistic, which, at least as a rule, cannot be split up into organic or psychological components" (Merskey 2004: 71). Fields states that pain "is generated in the brain. It is neural and mental. It is physical pain in the sense that nerve cells and their activity are physical. Pain is mental pain in the sense that it is subjectively experienced 'in' what we generally call the mind" (Fields 2007: 43). We can add that the experience of pain is always both "mind" and "body," mental and physical, simply because the pain experience is always embodied.

In actuality, the physical / mental distinction refers to cause, not the pain itself. According to the IASP, "activity induced in the nociceptor and nociceptive pathways by a noxious stimulus is not pain, which is always a psychological state." Although psychophysicists zeroing in on barely measurable neuron activity in rats will say they are studying pain, they are actually studying one point in a causal chain that ultimately produces a pain experience. Every time an author uses the phrase "physical pain," they are referring to cause, not pain.

That a given pain always has multiple causes, at varying removes from the experience, should be obvious, but this point is also often ignored (see Jackson 1994a) because the conventional model of pain focuses in on its proximate cause, the "nociceptive stimulus." That all pain results from a chain of causes prompts philosopher Mark

Sullivan to question whether we should even conceptualize pain as something that begins with nociception, given that the experience is so fundamentally influenced by previous experience (Sullivan 1995: 9).

The fraught arguments that took place until fairly recently at professional meetings and in journals expose some of the basic contradictions not just in pain medicine but in biomedicine as a whole. Researchers have abandoned the pain-as-sensation model and now agree that it is quite a complex process, a subjective response of a conscious individual, an interpretation of nociceptive inputs. Major advances in neurobiology "have generated a fundamental change in attitude and expectation about the control of pain" (Holdcroft and Power 2003: 635). A paradigm shift occurred in pain medicine with the widespread acceptance during the 1970s of a unified model: the gate control theory (Melzack 1999; Melzack and Wall 1996). (Other theories include the operant model, the Glasgow model, the biobehavioral model, fear-avoidance models, and diathesis–stress models [Taylor 2006: 241].) The gating control system model was more flexible than the neuroanatomical approach, and the current neuromatrix model incorporates multiple sites for modulation and extensive neuroplasticity (Holdcroft and Power 2003: 636). Traditional notions of pain-as-sensation in which a unidirectional nociceptive input from the body travels up the dorsal horn of the spinal cord and is processed by the central nervous system have been replaced by two-way flows along multiple pathways involving cognitive, emotional, and behavioral inputs that shape a nociceptive signal. Donald Price describes the unpleasantness of pain as reflecting "the contribution of several sources, including pain sensation, arousal, autonomic, and somatomotor responses, all in relation to meanings of the pain and to the context in which pain presents itself" (Price 2000: 1769). Fields discusses three distinct components of pain: a purely discriminative part, a motivational aspect, and an evaluative component, each of which takes place in different parts of the brain (Fields 2007: 45). All pain experience results from activating a neural representation in the brain, which is projected "in space to the site of tissue injury" (Fields 2007: 43). Loeser's comment above is confirmed: nothing outside the mind / brain is capable of hurting. He advises that pain is "not a thing; it is a concept that we impose upon a set of observations of ourselves and others" (Loeser 1996: 102).

According to Linda Watkins and Steven Maier, pain is the most dynamic of the senses (Watkins and Maier 2003: 232–233). Pain pathways are much more responsive to pain modulatory systems, including top-down influences like learning, attention, expectation, and mood (see Fields 2007: 52–53). In this and other respects the contrast between pain and other modalities of perception like vision, hearing, and touch is striking (Aydede and Guzeldere 2002: S266). Anita Holdcroft and Ian Power report on evidence that "inhibitory, immune, hormonal… and inflammatory systems may enhance or inhibit neuronal activity" (Holdcroft and Power 2003: 638). Processes that enhance pain constitute another paradoxical example of "good" pain, for hyperalgesia increases one's focus on the damaged or infected area. Modulating systems may release endogenous opioid peptides (endorphins) that suppress pain. Furthermore, a "mental representation of an impending sensory event can significantly shape neural processes that underlie the formulation of the actual sensory experience" (Koyama et al. 2005: 12950). Experimental manipulation of expected pain shows significant effects on reported pain experience, one study showing that positive expectations

"produce a reduction in perceived pain (28.4%) that rivals the effects of a clearly analgesic dose of morphine" (Koyama et al., 2005: 12950). Also, over time, persistent pain "can produce changes in the nervous system pathways responsible for the transmission and perception of pain messages, and thereby affect future responses to pain" (Keefe and France 1999: 138). In short, "the state of an individual determines the present pain" (Holdcroft and Power 2003: 638). Many conditions lacking tissue damage (e.g., phantom limb pain) that would have resulted in a patient being referred for psychiatric treatment in earlier times are now understood to be due to normal neurological processing, or altered cerebral representation of nociceptive input, which explains many cases of chronic back pain. The diagnostic trajectory is clear – which is not to say that psychiatric referrals ought to end, but that clinicians must take into consideration the fact that purely psychogenic pain is very rare (Taylor 2006: 242; also see Kleinman et al. 1992: 4), and that what is much more frequent are initial tissue damage and subsequent interactions by "a complex set of emotional, environmental and psychophysiological variables" (Ingvar 1999: 1347) that can permanently alter the brain and produce a chronic pain condition. This is a far cry from concluding that if tissue damage is not apparent, a patient's pain is due to a neurosis, and therefore "imaginary."

Many of the research findings that have brought about these "fundamental changes" were obtained using neuroimaging technologies developed over the past 30 years: positron emission tomography (PET), and functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). The value of these technologies lies in their ability to reveal changes in brain functioning in response to painful stimuli, profoundly increasing understanding of how the brain processes – i.e., represents, interprets – sensory stimuli. These technologies permit pain's status as a symptom, knowable only through pain behavior (any behavior, verbal or non-verbal, seen to result from a pain experience), to change into a sign – visible and measurable brain activity. Because of medicine's emphasis on objective measures ("evidence-based medicine"), findings obtained through imaging technologies are seen as more valid, reliable, and replicable. An example: Ploghaus et al. discuss neuroimaging research into areas of the brain where "activation of mechanisms to prevent future harm by learning to recognize signals of impending pain" occurs, which are "distinct from the neural substrates of pain itself" (Ploghaus et al. 1999: 1979, 1981). Another example: recent studies reveal neurological affective responses (called "mirroring") to depictions of someone in pain, which shows the neural substrates of empathy (Tait, 2008; also see Singer et al. 2004). Clearly, the last 40 years of pain medicine research offers a plethora of research topics for anthropology of science scholars.

Not surprisingly, these neuroimaging technologies are "good to think." A considerable gap exists between brightly colored successive two-dimensional images of computer-generated information and the experience of pain (Dumit 2004). For one thing, the quality of imaging studies is highly constrained by small sample size (Ingvar 1999: 1353). The limits of neuroimaging are particularly apparent in clinical settings: "…the MRI is still just a snapshot of the anatomy. It does not reveal physiology. It does not show pain. The picture it yields is no more self-explanatory than a rash or a heart murmur. The image – like any physical finding or laboratory test result – must be interpreted, and the fundamental, irreplaceable basis for its interpretation must be the patient" (Saberski 2007: 253).

## Some Clinical Considerations

Pain medicine emerged as a stand-alone specialty in the 1970s. Over the succeeding years significant advances were made, the first being the gradual acceptance of pain itself as worthy of attention, for example, deserving of a slot in medical school curricula. Improvements were made in understanding the differences between acute pain and chronic pain. As already indicated, pain is commonly seen as a symptom rather than a disease, a "normal" indication of something abnormal; chronic pain, having lost this function, is itself the problem. Hundreds of pain clinics, both inpatient and outpatient, many taking a multidimensional approach, were established in North America and Europe. New kinds of pain medications and anti-depressants were developed, as well as devices like TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation). A battery of sophisticated instruments (e.g., the McGill Pain Terms Assessment; the Pain and Impairment Relationship Scale) were developed and used in these clinics alongside older instruments like the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI). Cognitive-behavioral medicine approaches were custom-tailored for pain patients; for example, instruction in inducing the relaxation response. Recent research has shown that practices like meditation, prayer (Wachholtz and Pearce 2009), or self-hypnosis may affect the serotonin pathways in the brain that regulate mood and pain (see, e.g., Seybold 2007). Research has also shown that pain-coping skills can influence higher centers in the brain to the extent of actually blocking the flow of pain signals from the spinal cord (Melzack and Wall 1996). Knowledge about optimal clinician attitudes and behavior increased; for example, Raymond Tait reports that an empathic provider "may be less vulnerable to the general provider tendency to discount the intensity of chronic pain" (Tait 2008: 110).

But problems remain. For example, despite a widespread consensus that a great deal of pain is undertreated, and although efforts have been made to ameliorate the situation (for instance the recently installed signs in examining rooms asking patients to rate their pain), undertreatment continues to be a serious problem (see Morris 1994: 10). Part of the reason is the West's "drug problem," in particular the illegal traffic in prescription drugs, which has led governments to very tightly regulate opioids (the most potent pain-killers). Another reason, surely, is that despite our powers of empathy and knowledge about certain diseases' ability to produce tremendous amounts of pain (sickle-cell disease, cancer), we cannot feel another person's unmediated pain. This issue was mentioned over and over by patients in the inpatient pain center where I conducted ethnographic research in 1986; for example, "I wish that doctor could feel this pain for a day – only for a day, because I wouldn't want *anyone* to feel it any longer than that" (Jackson 2000). Finally, certain attitudes about pain doubtlessly contribute to its undertreatment, for example, the notion that sufferers (particularly men) should just "grin and bear it." Because we have all had pain, a kind of "mountain-out-of-a-molehill" response sometimes occurs, asserting that because everyone has aches and pains, the sufferer needs to stop being childish, self-indulgent, and weak; rather, he should "pull himself together." If female, she should seek psychological counseling (Thernstrom 2010: 148).

Other responses to pain sufferers by people not in pain, including health care professionals, can lead to disappointment and frustration as well. Pain's potential benefits might be mentioned, the pain sufferer told that adversity provides an opportunity for

growth, or that pain builds character. Of course, adversity *can* lead to growth, but when a pain sufferer hears such a comment she can feel put down and unheard. Now, if *she* chooses to make such a comment about herself, because the messenger is always part of the message, a very different message is being sent. Not surprisingly, the benefits of pain are, for the most part, touted by people who are not suffering serious pain.

Seemingly so easily defined as pain that lasts and lasts, as symptoms that persist beyond expected healing time, in clinical practice chronic pain is a deeply ambiguous and fraught concept. Eccleston et al. (1997: 707) comment that "chronic pain creates a challenge to orthodox and accepted understandings of illness and medicine." Robert Kugelmann states that "chronic pain as an entity finds its very existence disputed" (1999: 1665). "The question of pain is not in what category to classify it, for the categories themselves are freighted with philosophical presuppositions, not labels for pre-existing things" (Kugelmann 2000: 306). This slide between the simple meaning of chronic pain and much more complex ones is encountered throughout the pain medicine literature. Another example: David Patterson states that although almost all chronic pain originates from some sort of illness or injury, "once it persists for longer than six months, it is often maintained by factors that have nothing to do with the original damage" (Patterson 2004: 254), such as emotional distress, excessive focus on physical complaints, and the like. A too-simple opposition between acute = organic cause and chronic = psychological cause, while appealingly clear-cut, in fact does not represent any number of well-understood chronic conditions like post-herpetic neuralgia, endometriosis or rheumatoid arthritis. One can find examples in the anthropological literature as well. Kleinman et al. state that chronic pain has not been shown to be universal – it is not something that crosses "cultures and historical epochs" (1992: 3). Taken at face value, the statement either is making a methodological point verging on the hyperempirical ("not been shown…"), or seems to be stating that in other cultures pain that lasts might not exist at all, which this author finds hard to believe. However, the authors later make it clear that they are talking about the many problems encountered by those studying and treating "intractable," "pathological" chronic pain, sometimes referred to as chronic pain syndrome. And further on they discuss chronic pain's uncertain status: "a widely used clinical category without official sanction, an anomalous category, only partially legitimized as disease" (Kleinman et al. 1992: 4). Another diagnostic distinction, whose terminology chronic pain sufferers might find somewhat odd, is the one between "benign" chronic pain and "malignant" pain (i.e., due to cancer).

In short, the goal of establishing widely accepted diagnostic terminology continues to be elusive. Watkins and Maier apply the phrase "pathological pain" to any chronic pain that fails to meet two criteria: well understood causal mechanisms and optimal pain management on the part of the patient (Watkins and Maier 2003; see Baszanger 1998). Of course, all chronic pain is "pathological" in the sense of unfortunate and no longer serving any biological function. But chronic pain that fails to meet these two criteria is "pathological" in several additional, very significant respects.

Studying chronic pain exposes the normativity lurking just underneath the surface of the presumed neutral position of biomedicine, where "wrong" or "bad" have very constrained meanings linked to departures from the body's normal structure and function. Biomedicine sees pathology – the "abnormal" – to be a physical state. But we have just seen that clinicians distinguish between what we might call "good" chronic

pain and "bad" chronic pain. In fact, virtually all chronic pain sufferers' lifeworlds are filled with normative discourses deploying multiple meanings of right and wrong, "should" and "should not." Sooner or later any discussion of chronic pain must deal with a slew of negatively valenced issues, and in the following section I briefly discuss eight of them. (Note that they are not mutually exclusive.)

The first negative issue is the nature of the experience itself – unending pain that experiencers and those around them want to go away. The second, which characterizes all chronic illnesses, arises due to the fact that the sick role is legitimate only for a period of time. The third negative aspect stems from the belief that pain's persistence signals that *something went wrong*. We may know perfectly well that many incurable conditions cause a great deal of pain, gout or diabetic neuropathy coming to mind. But we are so oriented toward thinking of pain as something that will go away, and of medicine as producing cures, that we tend to see chronic illness as not only unfortunate, but wrong in the sense that, even if no-one is to blame, failure has somehow occurred. Biomedicine developed in an era characterized by successful campaigns that greatly reduced infectious diseases' incidence or severity – or eliminated them altogether (e.g., smallpox and yaws). We have barely begun to heed recommendations that we reconceptualize medicine as a set of knowledges and practices oriented toward treating chronic illness. Because physicians are oriented toward achieving cures, a chronic pain patient's attending physician will sooner or later experience frustration – if not more negative emotions, and the patient may come to feel that she is somehow to blame, or may blame her doctor or the institution that treated her (see Wright et al. 2009: 137). The Latin root for "pain," after all, means punishment. In a just and orderly world, our reasoning goes, innocent people would not be suffering like this, so something must be *wrong*.

The fourth negative issue appears if the clinician determines that the patient is not managing the situation as well as he should. Chronic pain patients rather easily fall out of the category of patients physicians are eager to treat and into the category of being "a pain" themselves – a "crock" (see Gamsa 1994: 23). Relations between pain patients and health care deliverers are considered the worst in medicine. In fact, pain patients can provoke an intense hostility in caregivers, often the result of a relationship that has seriously deteriorated. The sources of clinicians' negative feelings include, first, the simple fact of the practitioner's failure to end the pain; second, noncompliant patients; third, patients who "shop" for doctors with liberal pain-medication prescription policies; fourth, patients who obtain pain medications from more than one physician; and fifth, patients who clearly need to be weaned, at least to some degree, from the health care delivery system.

The fifth negative issue derives from pain's invisibility. Even those patients who have a well-understood painful disease struggle with this property of pain. Pain cannot be communicated without pain behavior. The distinctions between the experience of pain, pain behavior, and certain emotional states seen to often accompany, rather than constitute pain, such as suffering, depression, or demoralization, can be, and often are, highly ambiguous. Indeed, separating the pain experience from experiences accompanying it is a demanding, perhaps impossible, task and one reason why sufferers find that making their pain apparent can elicit negative, unsupportive responses. Although, as Laurence Kirmayer (1988: 83) points out, people tend to view the stoic as mentally sound and morally upright, the problem remains that people interacting

with individuals who "suffer with dignity" must have some way of finding out about the status of the sufferer's pain. The problem with the stiff-upper-lip approach is that most people, while respecting stoic forbearance, nonetheless find it hard to believe someone is experiencing severe pain unless reminded of it at least intermittently. Precisely because we all have had pain, and for most of us our pain went away, it is hard to imagine situations where it does not. Despite the fact that huge numbers of the world's population live with daily pain, it is difficult to deeply, empathically comprehend the nightmare of living with severe pain that lasts and lasts. For one thing, such an idea is threatening; it is no accident that hell is envisioned as severe chronic pain. I have argued elsewhere (Jackson 2005b) that chronic pain, by profoundly challenging mind–body dualism, turns the person embodying that challenge into someone ambiguous, perceived to transgress the categorical divisions between mind and body and to confound the codes of morality surrounding sickness and health. Sufferers' uncertain ontological status threatens the normal routines of biomedical treatment and the expectations governing ordinary face-to-face interactions between individuals labeled "sick" and other members of their social world. This is why some of my interviewees commented that managing the pain was more difficult than the pain itself. Sociologist R. A. Hilbert (1984) describes people who experience persistent pain as "falling out of culture."

The sixth negative issue appears when the cause of the chronic pain is not well understood. We have seen how easily an unknown cause can morph into a diagnosis of "chronic pain syndrome," and that the phrase "chronic pain" often refers exclusively to this category of patient, especially when "intractable" precedes the phrase (note that *intractable* simply means unresponsive to treatment).

The seventh, and most complex negative issue, closely related to the sixth, occurs when a diagnosis of psychogenic pain is made, which often results in the sufferer being seen to not have a "real" illness or "real" pain. Suggestions to patients about psychogenic inputs can invite worry about being seen as mentally ill, which undoubtedly is a major reason why people involved in chronic pain – sufferers, their families, and primary care physicians – are so often invested in seeing pain in mechanical terms: the archetypical lighted match under a finger. For the majority, any suggestion of mediation by the mind is seen to decrease the organic quality of a pain experience, thereby increasing its "wrong," potentially stigmatizing quality. A "real" pain, seen as simple physiological communication about tissue damage from an external cause or an internal organ malfunction, fits into an uncomplicated model that challenges neither conventional notions about the separation between the body and mind nor ideas about who deserves sympathy for bodily injury. Seeing pain as an experience felt by an individual with a personal history, who is embedded in a social and cultural milieu – surely the way to conceptualize it – admits the possibility that the sufferer might have somehow "brought it on himself" to some extent.

Despite pain medicine's advances, most people continue to rather categorically oppose "real" (organic, physical) pain to "all-in-your-head" (imaginary, mental, emotional, or psychosomatic) pain. Institutional actors play a role, too; as Mara Buchbinder notes, health insurance and worker's compensation boards require "proof" of pain before reimbursement (Buchbinder 2010: 123). In short, pain continues to have a complicated relationship with "real" signs of abnormality, which speak in the Cartesian idiom of objectifiable reality that can be socially apprehended.

The eighth, and final, negative issue concerns the degree to which the cause of a sufferer's chronic pain ethically entitles them to the sick role. The most deserving are those who have experienced tragic events, for example, a robbery that resulted in serious trauma. These sufferers' moral status is impeccable, for they are seen to have in no way deserved their fate. Less deserving are people who are seen to be responsible to some degree for their current situation – for example, being involved in a car accident while on drugs and ending up a paraplegic. Also less deserving are people whose neuroses are seen to produce or augment their continuing pain. Their mental "weaknesses" disqualify them from membership in the first group because their pain's cause lies within them, and from the second group because the cause is located in their unconscious. Finally, individuals who knowingly misrepresent the degree of impairment they have sustained in order to access medical treatment or financial compensation are seen as morally reprehensible malingerers, some of them outright criminals who should be prosecuted for fraud.

Unfortunately, how to go about assigning individual patients to a specific category is not at all clear; researchers have pointed out that teams of clinicians in pain centers sometimes find themselves in heated disagreement during evaluation meetings (see Corbett 1986; Loeser 1996).

The question of entitlement is complicated further by the issue of possible gains. Some chronic pain sufferers are seen to resist getting better because they are unconsciously motivated by benefits obtained from being ill – "secondary gain." Three kinds of gain are distinguished in the clinical literature: primary gain diverts the patient's attention from a more disturbing problem; secondary gain is the interpersonal or environmental advantage supplied by a symptom; and tertiary gain involves someone other than the patient seeking or achieving gains from the patient's illness. Discussions in the literature about secondary gain analyze patients' attempts to "game the system." Phrases like "accident neurosis" and "cured by a verdict" refer to litigation following automobile or other accidents (Worzer et al. 2009).

## The Biopsychosocial Approach to Chronic Pain Treatment

Over the past forty years pain medicine has adopted behavioral medicine's biopsychosocial treatment model. Keefe and France note that a biopsychosocial perspective "emphasizes that pain is a dynamic process that not only is influenced by biological, psychological, and social mechanisms of pain, but also produces biological, psychological and social changes" (Keefe and France 1999: 137). While doubtless this approach is superior to the conventional medical one in many respects (see, e.g., Kleinman 1992: 170; Patterson 2004; Worzer et al. 2009), its therapeutic and normative implications need to be examined. Biopsychosocial therapies that talk of managing pain rather than curing it necessarily assign far less responsibility to the health professional. Shelley Taylor describes the clinician as "co-managing the problem with the patient. If the new technologies are to work, patients must consent and actively participate" (Taylor 1995: 594, as cited in Kugelmann 1997: 59). Being "responsible for one's pain" requires disciplining the body and mind. Ruthbeth Finerman and Linda Bennett argue that the new "responsibility and blame focused" explanatory models "have the added consequence of stigmatizing and further victimizing victims

by ascribing blame … [such that] disease, onset and outcome are directly ascribed to the afflicted themselves [who] are then subject to censure for personal failures which 'caused' their condition" (Finerman and Bennett 1995: 1; also see Kleinman 1992: 185). They go on: "such patients are forced to fight both health threats and social stigma or sickness-induced 'shame' " (1995: 2). As Eccleston et al. note, pain professionals' repositioning of themselves from a "healer" role to a "manager" role "has been recognised as a common response of orthodox knowledge when faced with threat and challenge" (Eccleston et al. 1997: 707). "In chronic pain, when the cause remains lost, the patient reappears to own that loss: the patient becomes the lost cause" (Eccleston et al. 1997: 700). Kugelmann considers such an implicit "morality of responsibility" in pain management to be "deeply exploitative" (1997: 59) and complains that "what are no longer recognized in the biopsychosocial chart of existence are limits. There are no limits to intervention into the patient's life" (Kugelmann 1997: 62). The biopsychosocial gaze at the clinic where I conducted my research was quite extensive. Many patients complained about unwanted staff intrusions into intimate aspects of their or their fellow patients' lives. For example, during a meeting of all patients and several staff members, one patient stated that he did not want to hear about a fellow patient's divorce in such a public setting, and asked, "what does her divorce have to do with her pain?" Of course stressors like going through a divorce can produce deleterious changes in physiological functioning and exacerbate pain, which most patients understood. This patient was mainly objecting to the public nature of the intervention – which staff saw as therapeutic.

## Pain Narratives

A significant amount of literature has emerged in recent years that discusses the stories patients tell, "illness narratives," virtually all of which are shot through with accounts of pain. (see Das 1997; Kleinman 1988; Mattingly and Garro 2000). Space limitations allow only a brief mention of some of the issues. Some scholars focus in on interpreting pain narratives (Charon 2005: 37–40). A frequently encountered issue concerns the way severe, unending pain challenges a sufferer's very identity. Pain narratives are often gripping: even "pointless," "meaningless" pain can motivate the teller to aim for impressive heights of descriptive power, in particular through metaphor, and fashion dramatic appeals to the interlocutor. Pain can be an enemy, a "monster" (Good 1992) that takes over one's body – which can turn into something unrecognizable, alienated ("possessed"), even traitorous. Pain exiles sufferers from their own bodies, which surface as "strangely *other*" (Goldberg 2009: 34, 35; emphasis in the original). Some accounts vividly describe rejection, in no uncertain terms, of the painful body part.

A great deal has been written, often employing a phenomenological approach, about the relationship between language and pain. According to Jason Throop, the theme of pain-resisting language appears regularly in the literature. Pain tends "to actively 'resist' the cultural patterning of linguistic and interpretive frames" (Throop 2002: 13; also see Daniel 1994; Goldberg 2009: 33). Kleinman et al. write that pain "…occurs on that fundamental level of bodily experience which language encounters, attempts to express, and then fails to encompass" (Kleinman et al. 1992: 7; also see

Jackson 1994b). Due to pain's "unsharability," Elaine Scarry writes that "physical pain does not simply resist language but actively destroys it, bringing about an immediate reversion to a state anterior to language, to the sounds and cries a human being makes before language is learned" (Scarry 1985: 4–5). Drew Leder makes a similar point: "…pain is the consummately private sensation… It is, in fact, actively speech destroying" (Leder 1990, as cited in Throop 2009: 33).

Apart from instruments like the McGill Pain Terms Questionnaire, information about pain not experimentally induced is obtained during medical, psychiatric, or social science interviews. Buchbinder provides a valuable discussion about the constraints the anthropological interview places on the interviewee, in particular what gets left out (2010: 124). Rather than examine the literature on narrative, she argues, we should be looking at the field of rhetoric, for the interview occurs in a setting of unequal power balance where the patient is highly invested in communicating her view of what has happened and her status as a moral being (see Jackson 2005a).

## Conclusions

This chapter has presented some areas in pain research and treatment of particular interest to anthropology. That so much is at stake when people hurt for long periods of time makes chronic pain a loaded topic, one constantly being discussed in medical, political, and economics venues. Pain's meanings are so dependent on culture that generalizing about the cross-cultural anthropological research on pain poses a major challenge. Of course, any experience is heavily influenced by its context, but accepting that the meaning of a pain experience is its most important determinant is quite difficult, in part because of our notion of pain as a sensation. Pain seems so fundamentally biological – a noxious stimulus and hard-wired response – that recent findings about the plasticity of the central nervous system and its responsiveness to, for example, emotional or environmental variables, can seem counter-intuitive. The "fundamental tension between pain as subjectively understood versus pain as objectively characterized" (Aydede and Guzeldere 2002: S266) continues. The abundant evidence of pain's multimodality requires that we accept the likelihood of a wide range of influences on the pain experience. For example, some aspects of pain processing, such as coping, induce neural processing prior to actual pain stimulus (Ingvar 1999: 1347). Also, chronic high levels of pain constitute a prominent stressor that can produce activation and inflammation of immune system and neuroendocrine reactivity, which can feed back into the pain processing system and permanently change it (Sturgeon and Zautra 2010: 105).

Pain continues to be seen as a "thing" rather than an experience. Full acceptance, even within pain medicine, of pain's location exclusively in the brain / mind will be a long time coming, if phrasing in current pain medicine publications is any indication. For example, "pain can therefore be expected to influence brain processing on many levels" (Ingvar 1999: 1347). Media articles with similar phrasing also appear regularly, for example, "Acupuncture 'lessens pain in brain not body,' scientists discover" (Hough 2010).

The situation faced by sufferers of chronic pain exposes several fault lines of the dominant positivist and Cartesian understandings of selfhood and the human body as

they have been institutionalized in U.S. biomedicine. Certain conceptual and moral foundations of biomedicine classify people into categories that pain-sufferers straddle, including those based on two of biomedicine's most basic discourses. The first one, illustrated by the imputation of psychogenic pain, is that of the real and unreal, "physical and mental, real and imaginary" (Kirmayer 1988: 83). And pain sufferers not only reveal the inadequacies of this classificatory system, they also threaten the ethical and normative implications accompanying that system by defying attempts to classify them as a particular kind of moral being. This second discourse – Kirmayer's "accident and moral choice" (1988: 83) – is that of responsibility.

In short, chronic pain patients embody disorder: It might not be going too far to describe chronic pain sufferers as being seen to attack the established order of the part of the universe having to do with received wisdom about the body and mind. If, as Kirmayer suggests, the dualism of Western culture is firmly rooted in the West's construction of the moral order and the person, then understanding the role played by "the fundamental experiences of agency and accident, and their moral consequences" is crucial (Kirmayer 1988: 58). Elsewhere (Jackson 2005b) I have suggested that pain sufferers occupy an ambiguous space with respect to agentive, as opposed to completely involuntary, action, and, as a consequence, ambiguity will inhere in any moral evaluations concerned with agency.

The degree to which changes in the biomedical paradigm, in particular its shift to ever-greater acknowledgment and incorporation of mind–body connections, will benefit sufferers of chronic pain is anyone's guess. Although neuroimaging represents a significant advance in pain medicine, in some respects, it has strengthened biomedicine's model of disease "as a thing spatially located in the body" (see Morris 2008: 400). Despite a highly significant shift in clinicians' language about pain (and the pain patient) resulting from these technologies (see, e.g., Merskey 2004), pain still straddles the body–mind fence and still continues to represent a fundamental medical anomaly. In clinical settings pain continues to be seen as in need of validation before a reliable diagnosis can be reached. But there *are* indications that such a shift is occurring (see, for example, Hardcastle 1999; Melzack 1996; Merskey 2004). According to Fields, the gate control hypothesis, proposed four decades ago, "brought the most clinically relevant aspects of pain out of the realm of pure psychology and into the realm of neuroscience. A corollary of this was to provide enhanced respectability for pain patients, for the physicians who cared for them and for the scientists working in the field" (Fields 2007: 50).

It is to be hoped that more anthropologists will consider investigating this compelling topic.

## REFERENCES

Aydede, Murat and Guven Guzeldere, 2002 Some Foundational Problems in the Scientific Study of Pain. Philosophy of Science 69: S265–S283.

Baszanger, Isabelle 1998 Inventing Pain Medicine: From the Laboratory to the Clinic. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Bates, Maryann S., 1996 Biocultural Dimensions of Chronic Pain: Implications for Treatment of Multi-Ethnic Populations. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Beecher, Henry K., 1946 Pain in Men Wounded in Battle. Annals of Surgery 123: 96–105.
Brand, Paul, and Philip Yancey, 1993 Pain: The Gift Nobody Wants. New York: HarperCollins.
Buchbinder, Mara, 2010 Giving an Account of One's Pain in the Anthropological Interview. Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry 34: 108–131.
Chapman, C. Richard, Yoshio Nakamura, and Christopher N. Chapman, 2000 Pain and Folk Theory. Brain and Mind 1: 209–222.
Charon, Rita, 2005 A Narrative Medicine for Pain. *In* Narrative, Pain and Suffering. Progress in Pain Research and Management. John Loeser, Daniel Carr, and David Morris, eds. Seattle: International Association for the Study of Pain Press: 29–44.
Corbett, Kitty, 1986 Adding Insult to Injury: Cultural Dimensions of Frustration in the Management of Chronic Back Pain. Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley.
Daniel, Valentine E., 1994 The Individual in Terror. *In* Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self. Thomas J. Csordas, ed. pp. 229–247. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Das, Veena, 1997 Language and Body: Transactions in the Construction of Pain. *In* Social Suffering. Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das and Margaret Lock, eds. pp. 67–92. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Dumit, Joseph, 2004 Picturing Personhood: Brain Scans and Biomedical Identity. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Eccleston, Chris, Amanda C. De C. Williams, and Wendy Stainton Rogers, 1997 Patients' and Professionals' Understandings of the Causes of Chronic Pain: Blame, Responsibility and Identity Protection. Social Science and Medicine 45(5): 699–709.
Fields, Howard L., 2007 Setting the Stage for Pain: Allegorical Tales from Neuroscience. *In* Pain and Its Transformations: The Interface of Biology and Culture. Sarah Coakley and Kay Kaufman Shelemay, eds. pp. 36–61. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Finerman, Ruthbeth, and Linda A. Bennett, 1995 Overview: Guilt, Blame and Shame in Sickness. Social Science and Medicine 40(1): 1–3.
Gamsa, Ann, 1994 The Role of Psychological Factors in Chronic Pain. II. A Critical Appraisal. Pain 57(1): 17–29.
Garro, Linda C., 1992 Chronic Illness and the Construction of Narratives. *In* Pain as Human Experience: An Anthropological Perspective. M. Good et al., eds, pp. 100–137. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Goldberg, Daniel S., 2009 Exilic Effects of Illness and Pain in Solzhenitsyn's Cancer Ward: How Sharpening the Moral Imagination Can Facilitate Repatriation. Journal of Medical Humanities 30: 29–42.
Good, Byron J., 1992 A Body in Pain – The Making of a World of Chronic Pain. *In* Pain as Human Experience: An Anthropological Perspective. M. Good et al., eds., pp. 29–48. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Good, Mary-Jo Delvecchio, Paul E. Brodwin, Byron J. Good, Arthur Kleinman, eds., 1992 Pain as Human Experience: An Anthropological Perspective. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Greenhalgh, Susan, 2001 Under the Medical Gaze: Facts and Fictions of Chronic Pain. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Hardcastle, Valerie Gray, 1999 The Myth of Pain. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Hilbert, R. A., 1984 The Acultural Dimensions of Chronic Pain: Flawed Reality Construction and the Problem of Meaning. Social Problems 31(4): 365–378.
Holdcroft, Anita, and Ian Power, 2003 Management of Pain. British Medical Journal 326: 635–639.
Hough, Andrew, 2010 Acupuncture "Lessens Pain in Brain Not Body," Scientists Discover. Daily Telegraph (London), February 6.
IASP (International Association for the Study of Pain), Subcommittee on Taxonomy, 1979 Pain Terms: A List with Definitions and Notes for Usage. Pain 6(3): 249.

Ingvar, Martin, 1999 Pain and Functional Imaging. Philosophical Transactions: Biological Sciences 354: 1387: 1347–1358.

Jackson, Jean E., 1994a The Rashomon Approach to Dealing with Chronic Pain. Social Science and Medicine 38(6): 823–833.

Jackson, Jean E., 1994b Chronic Pain and the Tension between the Body as Subject and Object. *In* Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self. Thomas Csordas, ed. pp. 201–228. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jackson, Jean E., 2000 "Camp Pain": Talking with Chronic Pain Patients. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Jackson, Jean E., 2005a How to Narrate Chronic Pain? The Politics of Representation. *In* Narrative, Pain and Suffering. Progress in Pain Research and Management. John Loeser, Daniel Carr, and David Morris, eds. pp. 229—242. Seattle: International Association for the Study of Pain Press.

Jackson, Jean E., 2005b Stigma, Liminality, and Chronic Pain: Mind–Body Borderlands. American Ethnologist 32(3): 332–353.

Keefe, Francis J., and Christopher R. France, 1999 Pain: Biopsychosocial Mechanisms and Management. Current Directions in Psychological Science 8(5): 137–141.

Kempner, Joanna, 2006 Uncovering the Man in Medicine: Lessons Learned from a Case Study of Cluster Headache. Gender & Society 20(5): 632–656.

Kirmayer, Laurence J., 1988 Mind and Body as Metaphors: Hidden Values in Biomedicine. *In* Biomedicine Examined. Margaret Lock and Deborah Gordon, eds. pp. 57–93. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic.

Kleinman, Arthur, 1988 The Illness Narratives: Suffering, Healing and the Human Condition. New York: Basic Books.

Kleinman, Arthur, 1992 Pain and Resistance: The Delegitimation and Relegitimation of Local Worlds. *In* Pain as Human Experience: An Anthropological Perspective, M. Good et al., eds. pp. 169—197. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kleinman, Arthur, 1995 What Is Specific to Biomedicine? *In* Writing at the Margin: Discourse between Anthropology and Medicine. pp. 21–40. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kleinman, Arthur, Paul E. Brodwin, Byron J. Good, Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good, 1992 Pain as Human Experience: An Introduction. *In* Pain as Human Experience: An Anthropological Perspective. M. Good et al., eds. pp. 1–28. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kotarba, Joseph A., 1983 Chronic Pain: Its Social Dimensions. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Koyama, Tetsuo, John G. McHaffie, Paul J. Laurienti and Robert C. Coghill, 2005 The Subjective Experience of Pain: Where Expectations Become Reality. PNAS 102(36) 12950–12955.

Kugelmann, Robert, 1997 The Management and Psychology of Pain: Gate Control as Theory and Symbol. Theory and Psychology 7(1): 43–65.

Kugelmann, Robert, 1999 Complaining about Chronic Pain. Social Science and Medicine 49(12): 1663–1676.

Kugelmann, Robert, 2000 Pain in the Vernacular: Psychological and Physical. Journal of Health Psychology 5(3): 305–313.

Leder, Drew, 1990 Illness and Exile: Sophocles' Philoctetes. Literature and Medicine 9: 1–11.

Loeser, John D., 1991 What Is Chronic Pain? Theoretical Medicine 12: 213–215.

Loeser, John D., 1996 Mitigating the Dangers of Pursuing Cure. *In* Pain Treatment Centers at a Crossroads: A Practical and Conceptual Reappraisal. Mitchell J. M. Cohen and James N. Campbell, eds. pp. 101–108. Seattle: International Association for the Study of Pain Press.

Mattingly, Cheryl and Linda C. Garro, 2000 Narrative and the Cultural Construction of Illness and Healing. Berkeley: University of California Press

Melzack, Ronald, 1996 Gate Control Theory: On the Evolution of Pain Concepts. Pain Forum 5(2): 128–138.

Melzack, Ronald, 1999 From the Gate to the Neuromatrix. Pain S6: S121–S126.
Melzack, Ronald and Patrick D. Wall, 1996 The Challenge of Pain. London: Penguin Books.
Merskey, Harold, 2004 Pain Disorder, Hysteria or Somatization? Pain Research and Management 9(2): 67–71.
Morris, David B., 1991 The Culture of Pain. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Morris, David B., 1994 What We Make of Pain. The Wilson Quarterly. 18:4: 8–16, 18–26.
Morris, David B., 2008 Diabetes, Chronic Illness and the Bodily Roots of Ecstatic Temporality. Humanistic Studies 31: 399–421.
Patterson, David R., 2004 Treating Pain with Hypnosis. Current Directions in Psychological Science 13(6): 252–255.
Ploghaus, Alexander, Irene Tracey, Joseph S. Gati, Stuart Clare, Ravi S. Menon, Paul M. Matthews, J. Nicholas P. Rawlins, 1999 Dissociating Pain from its Anticipation in the Human Brain. Science 284: 1979–1981.
Price, Donald D., 2000 Psychological and Neural Mechanisms of the Affective Dimension of Pain. Science 288: 1769–1772.
Saberski, Lloyd, 2007 Pain and the Deceptive Disconnect. The Pain Clinic 19(6): 253–254.
Scarry, Elaine, 1985 The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World. New York: Oxford University Press.
Seybold, K., 2007 Physiological Mechanisms Involved in Religiosity / Spirituality and Health. Journal of Behavioral Medicine 30: 303–309.
Singer, T., B. Seymour, O'Doherty, J. et al., 2004 Empathy for Pain Involves the Affective but Not Sensory Components of Pain. Science 2004: 303(5661): 1157–1162.
Sturgeon John A. and Alex J. Zautra, 2010 Resilience: A New Paradigm for Adaptation to Chronic Pain. Current Pain and Headache Reports 14(2): 105–112.
Sullivan, Amy Burleson, 2007 Role of Exercise in Managing Chronic Pain. The Pain Clinic 19(6): 263–269.
Sullivan, Mark D., 1995 Pain in Language: From Sentience to Sapience. Pain Forum 4(1): 3–14.
Tait, Raymond C., 2008 Empathy: Necessary for Effective Pain Management? Current Pain and Headache Reports 12(2): 108–112.
Taylor, Renée R., 2006 Pain: Subtypes, Prevalence, and Associated Conditions. *In* Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Chronic Illness and Disability. Chapter 16, pp. 237–254. New York: Springer-Verlag.
Thernstrom, Melanie, 2010 The Pain Chronicles: Cures, Myths, Mysteries, Prayers, Diaries, Brain Scans, Healing, and the Science of Suffering. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
Throop, C. Jason, 2002 Experience, Coherence, and Culture: The Significance of Dilthey's "Descriptive Psychology" for the Anthropology of Consciousness. Anthropology of Consciousness 13(1): 2–26.
Tracey, Irene, 2005 Taking the Narrative Out of Pain: Objectifying Pain through Brain Imaging. *In* Narrative, Pain and Suffering. Progress in Pain Research and Management. John Loeser, Daniel Carr, and David Morris, eds. pp. 127–163. Seattle: International Association for the Study of Pain Press.
Trnka, Susanna, 2007 Languages of Labor: Negotiating the "Real" and the Relational in Indo-Fijian Women's Expressions of Physical Pain. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 21(4): 388–408.
Turner, Bryan, 1991 Recent Developments in the Theory of the Body. *In* The Body: Social Process and Cultural Theory. Mike Featherstone, Mike Hepworth and Bryan S. Turner, eds. pp. 1–35. London: Sage.
Wachholtz, Amy B. and Michelle J. Pearce, 2009 Does Spirituality as a Coping Mechanism Help or Hinder Coping with Chronic Pain? Current Pain and Headache Reports 13(2): 127–132.
Watkins, Linda R. and Steven F. Maier, 2003 When Good Pain Turns Bad. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 12(6): 232–236.

Whelan, Emma, 2003 Putting Pain to Paper: Endometriosis and the Documentation of Suffering. Health: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of Health, Illness and Medicine 7(4): 463–482.

Worzer, Whitney E., Nancy D. Kishino, Robert J. Gatchel, 2009 Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Losses in Chronic Pain Patients. Psychological Inquiry and Law 2: 215–224.

Wright, Lisa Johnson, Noloofar Afari, Alex Zautra, 2009 The Illness Uncertainty Concept: A Review. Current Pain and Headache Reports 13(2): 133–138.

Zborowski, Mark, 1969 People in Pain. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Zola, Irving K., 1966 Culture and Symptoms: An Analysis of Patients' Presenting Complaints. American Sociological Review 31: 615–630.

CHAPTER 22

# PERSONHOOD
## *Embodiment and Personhood*

*Andrew J. Strathern and Pamela J. Stewart*

## Embodiment as Concept and Theory

Theorizing about the body reached a new stage when it began to center on embodiment. In turn, embodiment as a topic of analysis can further be deepened if it is brought into alignment with personhood. Another category, the anthropology of experience, is also helpful because it can assist us in synthesizing ideas on all three conceptual arenas: the body, embodiment, and personhood.

The basic impetus behind the contemporary interest in embodiment stems from an attempt to rethink the established category opposition between body and mind, customarily traced back to the philosophy of Rene Descartes, but originating also in the older distinction between body and soul, which finds a resonance with cross-cultural classifications around the world. Personhood is clearly implicated here, since such basic categories are intrinsic to definitions of what constitutes humanity and so, in turn, particular persons. Embodiment theory seeks to move across the supposed body / mind dichotomy and to understand the embodied contexts of experience that are central to life processes. This does not mean that "body" is made the object of analysis, replacing "mind." It implies, rather, a new holistic approach, in which body, mind, and experience are brought together. Phenomenology, practice theory, and cognitive science can all be brought into service in pursuit of this aim. Thomas Csordas set the tone for these investigations with his proposal that embodiment be considered as a paradigm for anthropology (Csordas 2002: 38–87). Csordas intended this suggestion as leading to a "methodological perspective" rather than as a pathway to a fully separate arena of theorizing (2002: 38); however, he did intend that a focus on

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

embodiment could bring an integrative element to analyses in social and linguistic theory that might otherwise be pursued separately.

The terms embodiment and personhood call for some further clarification before we proceed here. Embodiment is not the same as "the body." Embodiment refers to patterns of behavior inscribed on the body or enacted by people that find their expression in bodily form. It thus bridges over from the body as a source of perception into the realms of agency, practice, feeling, custom, the exercise of skills, performance, and in the case of rituals performativity. It is especially within the sphere of rituals and what Catherine Bell (1992, 1997) called "ritualization" and "the ritualized body" that embodiment theory can helpfully be applied. With this delineation of the scope of embodiment as a term, it is clear again that the term crucially intersects with personhood. Personhood itself has two aspects. One relates to formal ideas and culturally established concepts: what we might call ideal conceptions. The other, however, relates to practice: what people actually do, how they negotiate interactions in their lives. This latter part of personhood is the part that inter-relates most closely with embodiment.

In our own ongoing research we have been concerned with performativity and agency in ritual and with the question of ritual efficacy; with general processual approaches to social phenomena, such as in the arenas of gossip and rumor (Stewart and Strathern 2004); and with how embodiment fits with the cosmos, the overarching frameworks of understanding into which people set human life and agency. A crucial mechanism that often relates people to their perceived cosmos is found in the acts of divination. Other arenas in which we are interested are: song, dance, and expressive activities; the expression of emotions; and identity constructions, including the use of alterity in building senses of the self. In this last context, the significance of phenomena such as cloning and the digital production of avatars is relevant, and links also with the production of ideas such as ghosts and shape-changers in classic mythology and in folk-tales. A further major set of issues revolves around language and the production of meanings, the origins of language, and the meanings of meaning as a term; and emerging from these issues the question of how to bring together the perspectives of embodiment and those of the new cognitive anthropology based on cognitive science propositions about the workings of the brain. With this question, the relevant topics come full circle, since cognition seems to imply "the mind," while embodiment appears to signify "the body," thus apparently reinstating the opposition which theorists of various persuasions have been concerned to transcend. Cognitive theorists themselves have sought to bridge this opposition by using concepts such as "enaction" that invoke embodied agency in the development of cognitive capacities, or "feeling," which locates consciousness within the body as a whole, not just in some sector of the brain.

## Efficacy, Cognition, and Intelligibility

We take first for further discussion ritual processes and the problem of ritual efficacy. Early anthropological approaches to ritual and its supposed magical underpinnings tended to assume that from the observer's viewpoint magic and ritual could not be effective because they were based on mistaken ideas about the world. Sir James

Frazer's work is usually cited in this regard. The response has been to concentrate more carefully on what the intentions of those performing the rituals actually are, how these intentions are set into a wider performative context, and the effects of the rituals on the performers themselves, i.e. their imputed psychological functions. For example, the relief of anxiety and the creation of confidence in outcomes, following Bronislaw Malinowski's work on the Trobriands, are usually cited here. An approach via embodiment provides a fundamental step. As several theorists have, in different ways, argued, the important thing about rituals is that they demand a clear bodily engagement from their performers. The body becomes an instrument of meaning in rituals in a way that heightens its functions in less marked contexts. Where magical practices are involved, bodily motions may be replaced by verbal expressions, but these either are replete with images of embodied process or are strings of sounds that convey a sense of power in part because of their apparent unintelligibility. In the much discussed instance of Trobriands garden magic, for example, the garden magician becomes a conduit for the whole cosmos of fertility in narrating his vision of how the tuber crops in the garden grow in the same way as a child grows within the womb. The words of the spells bring the future into the present, and the effect of the spell is like that of a dream or a prophecy by vividly presenting a desired outcome as an already existing event. Crucially, the magicians' body is brought into play in enacting the processes of growth in a mimetic fashion. The union of body and language brings perceptions of power with it. Pursuing this point a little further, we suggest that it is in ritualized performances that aspects of this union of body and language are explored and enhanced. One aspect is on what we may call the cognitive side: so-called metaphors are brought into play at the linguistic level in order to provide vivid images of the transplacement of ideas from one realm of experience to another, in the case of the Trobriands garden magic from the human body to the garden. The effect is to create a sense of sympathy and unity between the two realms, a unity that is appropriate given the fact that the body is the instrument by which fertility is created in both realms, and that there is a process of concealment and revelation over time: a child grows in the womb, yam plants grow their fruits underground. In cognitive terms, the function of metaphors of this kind is to create persuasive interpretations of reality and to project these into the world by means of embodied images. On the side of embodiment itself we have to take into account numbers of paralinguistic features, for example where the magical ritual is performed – it is emplaced in the garden area itself. The magician makes expressive gestures, employs his whole body as a theatrical agent in the performance of his magic. Gestures are employed as intensifiers of meaning and intention. The two sides of the activity that we have identified here, the cognitive and the embodied, are brought together in this way.

The question of "unintelligible" sounds that we have mentioned above can now also be explored further. Language uses sounds to produce meanings, but it draws on qualities of sound that lie outside of simple denotation. Within linguistic usage itself, how a passage sounds makes a great deal of difference to its impact. Communicative competence, in Dell Hymes's terms (e.g. Hymes 1964), involves the manipulations of sound registers as such, for example in terms of tone of voice (deep, high, passionate, calm). The accents people use are intensely communicative and appeal to senses of identity among listeners. This is especially so if dialect forms are employed: a flat

rendering of the Scottish poet Robert Burns's poem "Tam O'Shanter," for example, comes over very differently from one that is pronounced with vivid attention to the startling qualities of the words themselves and their relationship to the lived world from which they sprang. On the horizon of such aspects of meaning lie chants or spells for which lexical significata cannot be established or have been lost, but which retain a sense of power or mystery that is also powerful, perhaps as the language of the spirits or deities. The same point is ultimately true of what we call "vocables" in songs. What do these convey? Vocables are common in the song traditions of peoples in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, as we have discussed for the Hagen people (see Stewart and Strathern 2002a, 2005a). In the Mount Hagen area, people refer to them as belonging simply to "the neck" (*nuim kān mint*) as opposed to those parts of the song that have "words" (*ik mong*). The neck is the place where sounds are produced, the elementary location of meaning production; and the vocable parts of a song frame its beginnings and endings, and so give the song a temporal dimension in its performance. They communicate to listeners and performers alike that sounds are now beginning or ending, that in ritual terms and in terms similar to those proposed recently by Mark Johnson (2007) meaning is about to emerge from, or has emerged from, the body.

At a cognitive level, sounds are also capable of expressing or producing emotions in themselves: screams, cries of joy or disgust, a whole register of possibilities that rely on reading sounds via the experiential capacities of the body itself. Bringing back language into the body in this sense is a part of the interpretation that Thomas Csordas offered for the phenomenon of glossolalia or "speaking in tongues" in charismatic Christian contexts. Glossolalia is transgressive and seeks to transcend human language as an approach to the divine world. But it also brings speech back into the bodily frame, makes its embodied or "incarnate" character clear (Csordas 2002: 74–78).

Paradoxically, then, it is the feature of "unintelligibility," in the immediate sense, that gives to glossolalia an important arena of meaning for the worshippers among whom it is practiced. In the first place, it is an established cultural form, evoked at specific dramatic times in church services, just like prayers, hymns, or sermons, which involve other uses of sounds. Second, one explanation of it given by performers is that it is a language for communication with God, beyond ordinary language, and thus a vehicle of transcendence. Third, from the viewpoint of the observer or analyst, it reveals the ultimate source of language in bodily expression as such. Fourth, however, in its own context, it is expected to be followed by an inspired exposition of its meanings in conventional language by someone in the congregation to whom God communicates its meanings. This observation brings with it a parallel from the context of divination. A prophet, inspired by a deity, may express meanings that are beyond easy comprehension and require further parsing or interpretation, bringing back or recovering meaning from a horizon that lies beyond it. In this sense, we could see glossolalia also as inspired and thus an example of God experienced as speaking through human voices, just as occurs in cases of possession trance in many religious traditions around the world. A comparative approach, grounded in the idea of embodiment, provides a means of bringing different phenomena together under a single perspective of interpretation.

This way of looking at questions of intelligibility is strongly applicable when we consider the domains of art, music, and dancing. We have already referred to the

vocables deployed in songs. A context in which the categories mentioned here, of art, music, and dancing, all come together in one process is to be found in the indigenous courting practices of the Papua New Guinea Highlands (see Stewart and Strathern 2002a). Young people taking part in these practices decorated themselves for the occasion (art); the spectators sang songs (music); and the immediate performers engaged in expressive gestures with their heads and bodies (dancing). Clearly, all of these elements played their parts in a communicative drama intended to enhance attraction between the participants. They also revealed the existence of inner impulses and wishes that might not easily be expressed in other contexts, moments of choice, decision, and desire that could change the course of a life. The vividly embodied imagery employed in songs pointed in this direction, linking the singers also to specific localities to which they belonged, as in the following song from the Melpa language area of the Western Highlands of Papua New Guinea:

*Erol le pa ya wa yo e*
[a line of vocables]
*Mina ronom e*
The Mina stream flows
*Ndamb ronom e*
The Ndamb stream flows
*ndep ndep nu ye ninim erol*
Water drips down, drips down
*Erol le pa ya wa yo e*
[a line of vocables]
*Kora Kin a*
Kin of the place Kora
*Mba mondopa onom e*
Goes but returns
*Mundi kong roklnga ninim erol …*
Her heart is struck, she says …

The song is framed by vocables, beginning with "erol." When the vocables begin, the participant pair begin to bend their heads prior to bringing them together. The song itself refers to two streams that flow down in a local area of the singers, the Mina and Ndamb streams. They flow and their water drips down, drips down, like the flow of feelings of a person. A girl, Kin, has gone to be in a place where she has courted boys, but her heart has been "struck" with thoughts of the place of the singer, and she has come back to court with him here. It is in this kind of union of expressive forms that we have found the embodied power, and thus the significance, of this joining together of different expressive capacities. We can find a unity also in these forms and their counterparts in actions that are more readily recognized as "magical," for example the actions of shamanic practitioners engaged in healing rituals. It is important to recognize that the source of the unity expressed in these different modalities lies in embodiment itself. The participants in courting occasions sketched above chose face-paint, feathers, leaves, headnets, and the like to wear. Magical substances might be applied to their face-paint, acting like scent. Song was united with gesture, and the focus was on bringing the heads of the parties together. If this did not work well, i.e. they could not time their actions harmoniously, this

itself was taken as a divinatory sign that they could not form a relationship, and they would break off the movements. The chorus of spectators singing on the occasion brought a heightened awareness of the senses.

## Embodiment, the Senses, and Personscapes

Embodiment therefore involves all the senses. Occasions marked as rituals typically, though not universally, highlight the sensory aspects of experience. In turn, as is often remarked upon, sensory experience with its awareness of emplacement in landscapes, feeds strongly into memory and helps to form a residue of experience that stays with, and can transform, a person over time. We can refer to this stepwise process of co-evolution between person and landscape as the creation of "personscapes." While such formations do not equate analytically with personhood as a formal concept, we could say that they do relate strongly to "senses of self" and thus they influence the individual person's own developing interpretations of their personhood. In theoretical terms it is important to note that this means that embodiment does not simply refer to the body as a bounded entity but rather to the body, and the person, in their surrounding environment. Moreover, individuals, as well as cultural contexts, may vary in terms of which sensory experiences are felt to be significant or are picked out for emphasis.

One of the most powerful cross-cultural themes is the meaning of scent and smell (see, for example, Gell 1977; Howes 1991). Smell can be associated with the most positive, or appealing, attributes, but also with those least appealing: appealing smells refer to life and its enhanced experiences, smells that are repulsive relate to death and decay. So much might be claimed as universal tendencies. There can be, however, creative twists, as among the Pangia people of the Southern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea whom we have written about before (Stewart and Strathern 2001a, 2002b; Strathern and Stewart 2000a), where the term for anger is the same as that for a bad smell (*korimi*) and is appropriately linked to the nose and frown marks above the top of the nose, thus coinciding with the phrase in English of "making a stink" about an issue.

Bodily senses bridge over toward the arena of skills, which depend on the trained or intuitive use of awareness and its deployment in specific tasks. Knowledge that we call cultural takes the form of specific enskillments (Ingold 2000), and these can only be learned by practice, sometimes inculcated by formal learning, otherwise learned through mimetic faculties of "mind" and sense working together. In the sphere of technical work that involves, e.g., hand–eye coordination, this is obviously true. But we suggest, in line with the earlier theorizing of Bourdieu (1977), that enskillment is important also in the general formulation of the "habitus," enabling people to improvise sequences of actions that are appropriate without consciously scripting them. Language use is the most obvious example. But the idea is applicable to all spheres of action and may be held to rely on basic cognitive aptitudes. It should be stressed that the process is also contingent and vulnerable, filled with the potentiality for mistakes in the sequences of living interactions, and that people seek to establish and follow a pathway for themselves that stems from conscious reflection as well as sedimented habits. There is a struggle to embody values and patterns that is particular to each

person within their life context, and persons need "props" and reminders in order to continue on their pathways. Personhood in this light has to be seen as a process, not a fixed pattern.

## Ritual and Performance

At the comparative level, differences of habitus show in many ways, including in contexts of ritual, and we return now to the context of ritual practices, particularly bearing in mind Catherine Bell's (1992) concept of ritualization and the production of the ritualized body (on a related topic, see also, our discussion of Bell's work on the topic of "Mis-taking Misrecognition: Problems with a Marxist substratum in Ritual Studies" in Stewart and Strathern (n.d.). Ritual, including those rituals that are labeled as magical, is perceived by its performers and spectators to be effective when it corresponds to the sense pathways of the cosmos to which the bodies of those involved are attuned. This process of attunement is also one of enskillment. It involves apt performance (see also here Asad 1993). Just as there are perceptions in a biomedical system of good and bad medical practitioners, so there are perceptions of relative skill on the part of magicians and ritual specialists. Skilled ones are likely to be sought out, sometimes because of their adherence to traditions, sometimes because of their innovative practices. Ritual practices may appear static, but to retain vitality they must also show capacities for change (see, e.g., Kreinath et al. 2004). We give here two brief examples from our own research work in the New Guinea Highlands of what Ron Grimes would call "Ritual Criticism" (Grimes 1990) – in this case exercised by the people themselves not by the analyst.

The first example relates to the Female Spirit complex of rituals historically practiced in the Mount Hagen area, in the Western Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea (Stewart and Strathern 1999; Strathern and Stewart 1999, 2000b). The practice involved what we may call a "discovery period," during which evidences of the presence and activities of the Spirit in a particular group's territory would be identified by potential leaders in the rituals: special stones thought be "signs" would be found, for example, and people might dream that the Spirit had come to them with requests or orders to set up a site for her. A leader would ask around and eventually invite in a ritual expert from one of the putative arenas from which these rituals had originated on the southern fringes of the Hagen area. But not all experts were equal. One might come and set up a place for the Spirit: but if this action was followed by misfortunes in the group, sicknesses or accidents, this would be taken as a sign of the Spirit's displeasure, and another expert would be called in to dismantle the work of the earlier one and re-do the layout of the ritual site. The new arrangements would by definition differ from the ones first tried out, hence giving the possibility of variation and change over time.

The second example belongs to the introduced context of Christianity in the Mount Hagen area (Stewart and Strathern 2000, 2009). Just as there was competition between ritual experts dealing with major ritual complexes in the past, so there has been a more recent competition between the adherents of different Christian churches

vying for prestige and control in local clan areas. One context in which criticism and competition are exercised is that of trance and possession. The earlier introduced churches (mainly Lutheran and Catholic), did not emphasize practices of this kind, which were brought in later by proponents of charismatic and ecstatic forms of worship characteristic of Pentecostalist revival movements. Adherents of these new churches had to be socialized both into dramatic rejections of local non-Christian practices and into the adoption of modes of ritual behavior that resembled processes of possession or trance that were features of the rejected practices of the past: a paradoxical situation that could predictably lead to confusion and ambiguity. This indeed happened. People were encouraged to become possessed by the Holy Spirit, and this possession was signaled by bodily movements and expressions involving dance components. Individuals vying for attention and prestige in such contexts would criticize others' performances, typically arguing that the movements of rivals while in trance indicated that they were possessed by "bad spirits" or the Devil rather than by the true Holy Spirit. Exactly how this new form of embodied semiotics was coded was not clear, but the possibility of making such a criticism was clearly derived from the idea that "bad spirits" were spirits of the dead or nature spirits that had formed a part of the indigenous cosmos. Ritual criticism was thus aimed at weeding out these intrusive manifestations of past identities and selecting only the pure "modern" character of the Holy Spirit, whose presence was believed to bring blessings. In terms of our discussion on divination, it is further clear that the ritual criticism was itself a form of interpretive divination, reinforcing our point about the very broad significance of divination as a part of embodiment studies.

## Possession and Divination

Forms of ritual practice also often shape the basis of ritual criticism and expressions of identity in wider context. Witness the numerous arguments between Christian churches over centuries regarding forms of baptism, confirmation, or communion. The arguments center not only on ritual forms, but on their authorized meanings, as in the case of communion, and whether it is to be seen as a "symbol" or as an unmediated "reality." Similar arguments occur between sects of Islam, for example in relation to Sufi practices (see, e.g., studies in Stewart and Strathern 2005b) Possession practices linked to divination among the Giriama population studied by McIntosh (2009) further prove to be a significant index of interethnic relations and senses of identity. These Giriama, living near the area Malindi, have been extensively influenced by Islamic practices over time, emanating from Swahili and Arab sources. These sources belong to networks of historical power and superiority, as well as perceived cultural differences. The Malindi Giriama experience a deep ambivalence in their relationship with the Swahili, and this is played out in terms of spirit possession. Giriama diviners may suffer from involuntary possession by Islamic spirits that put pressure on them to convert to Islam (McIntosh 2009: 158), and cause them to vomit when eating Giriama foods that are forbidden to Swahili, such as palm wine or rats. McIntosh (2009: 162) refers to this situation as involving the Giriama as "reluctant hosts." The Muslim spirits may be referred to as "high" (in the sense of powerful) and the Giriama

ones as "low," but the latter are considered "good" and able to perform things for people more swiftly than the "Arab" ones (McIntosh 2009: 162). McIntosh does not see these patterns of experience as media for resistance to, or parodic mimesis of, hegemonic oppression, thus functioning as an embodied therapy. They rather reflect, she writes, the reluctant self-inscription of hegemony itself, as well as anger and resentment felt as a result of this process. Giriama do not emphasize an interiority of experience of individual choice very strongly (though, clearly, from the evidence such choices do occur), and they are prepared to accept various deities in a pattern McIntosh (2009: 189) calls "polyontologism." Traditionalist diviners among the Giriama invoke spirits in their own language, and sometimes use techniques that belong to their own oral, non-literate culture (2009: 217). Others rely on Arabic texts and literate practices. Oral instruments thus become associated with Giriama identity; literate ones with Islam and Swahili / Arabic identity. Malindi diviners are mostly non-literate and women; most Swahili diviners are literate and men (Mcintosh 2009: 234). Divination and its differently embodied practices thus become privileged sites in which conflicts over ethnic identity, power, language, gender, and personhood are constantly played out (compare here Seremetakis 1991).

## The Mindful Body

In our discussion so far, we have touched on a number of interrelated analytical sites where personhood and embodiment crucially affect each other or are actually merged: ritual, gender, identity, emotion, language use, and historical change, may all be involved, for example, as they are in the Giriama example, analyzed by McIntosh, which we have just discussed. In terms of ethnographic accounts, embodiment provides an excellent approach to understanding people's lives, simply because experience is always lived in bodily ways. In theoretical terms, however, there is an implicit debate between cognitive theorists and embodiment theorists because cognitive theory focuses on an arena of behavior that seems very like "mind," whereas embodiment theory is clearly bound up with "body." Of course, embodiment is also about "the embodied mind," and cognitive propositions imply the importance of embodied existence also. For instance, there is the proposition that "the mind" (universally?) possesses a Hypersensitive Agency Detection Device (HADD), and that in ritual contexts people are primed to become even more sensitive to potential agencies around them and so to attribute events in such contexts to spirit entities (Lanman 2007: 125–126). What is left out here is the emotional dimension of cognition. If there is a HADD, what triggers it, and what may have brought it into being in the first place? We can suggest that one trigger is fear or concern for danger. Another is the possibility of advantage. Both triggers could typically find their genesis in the experience and practice of hunting for game or foraging for food when predators might be at hand. If there is a HADD, then, it is registered not just in the mind but in the whole body, and goes with bodily capacities to fight, flee, or otherwise deal with a potentially hostile world. The same holds with regard to other propositions, such as that there is a "Violence-Inhibition Mechanism" (VIM) or "Cross-Domain Analogical Thinking" (CAT) or "Theory of Mind" (ToM) itself. All of these imputed mechanisms in practice are situated in the living actions of observers and actors as they go about managing

their survival. This point applies whether we are discussing conscious or unconscious patterns of behavior, and whether or not we think that cognitive science is the ultimate source of explanation of the phenomena that anthropologists investigate. Thus, there is no absolute division between cognitivist and embodiment approaches to explanation and understanding in anthropological theory. Embodiment theory, however, does keep us close to specifics. HADD, for example, may explain why there is a general propensity to seek agency in the causes of events. Embodiment theory can help to explain when and why HADD swings into play, e.g., in circumstances of danger, in relation to spirits of a locality, in terms of a need to divine for the future or find the causes of sickness or misfortune.

Embodiment does not mean, then, the neglect of "mind," but it does situate mind in "practice." Nor is it necessary to maintain, on behalf of embodiment as a concept, that indigenous theories of personhood make *no* distinctions between mind and body. Csordas (2002) and many others have been at pains to point to an arena of unity that transcends any simple dichotomy of mind and body. While some distinction of the sort may be maintained, it is encapsulated in a wider arena of integration. Some ethnographers report that the people they work with do not separate cognition from emotion (Lutz 1988 on the Ifaluk people of Micronesia). Others declare that "their" people do make such distinctions, as Jason Throop does for the Yapese, who live nearby to Ifaluk (Throop 2010: 106, referring there to Lutz's work). Throop identifies the concept of *yaen'* on Yap as important and similar to "mind." He also found 162 terms referring to mental processes, and 98 of these were built around the morphemic root of yaen'; often processes of an emotional kind were involved. A similar range of uses, minus the building of verbs from a morphemic root in this way, holds in the Melpa language of Mount Hagen in Papua New Guinea with regard to the term *noman* (see, e.g., Stewart and Strathern 2001b: 113–138). Certainly noman can be glossed as "mind," and interestingly enough it is ambiguously both embodied and not embodied, since it is notionally located in the chest and around the windpipe (source of both life and speech), yet no-one expects to see it if they were to open up a person's chest and inspect it. A contrast between a disembodied mind and the body that it nevertheless inhabits is suggested by this point. Yet such a conclusion would be only a partial representation, because what is really important about noman is that it is seen as intimately, indissolubly, linked with the body. Indeed its condition is said to explain what happens in the body: if a person is healthy, this is said to be because they have a good noman. Noman is thus embodied in practice, even if ontologically it is presented as not being where it is conventionally located. In general here, the Yapese concept of yaen,' ably delineated by Throop, seems to correspond quite closely to noman, and parallels are found widely in Pacific cultures. And it is not just "mind" that is involved, since mind and personhood are closely linked. A major theme of Throop's ethnography is that the Yapese idea of personhood is tied up with "suffering," and yaen' is involved in the governance of people's response to suffering (Throop 2010: 113).

## EMPLACEMENT, PERSONHOOD AND '*NOW-TIME*'

Embodiment theory, then, is not just theory about "the body," it deals with personhood and definitions of the person. This observation can help us to handle the

suggestions made by Todd Sanders in his book *Beyond Bodies* on rain-making in Tanzania (Sanders 2008). Sanders argues against anthropological interpretations that regard "the body" as a source of symbolism, whether the body is seen as primordial in experience or is simply a part of a wider cosmological world unified by metaphors and symbols (Sanders 2008: 9). His Ihanzu interlocutors themselves flatly refused any such interpretation of their rain-making rituals, in which stones and sticks classified in gendered terms as male and female figure as the necessary instruments of inducing rain to fall. Essentially, though, Sanders carries the cosmological approach a further step by casting out the notion of metaphor. For Ihanzu, the whole cosmos is gendered male and female and the forces generated by this gendering make the world "fertile and productive," according to the Ihanzu (Sanders 2008: 12). Gender, then, is cosmography, and the whole cosmos is the focus, not divided into nature and culture. This point about nature and culture is a familiar enough argument, as is the appeal to cosmography. Our point here, commenting on Sanders' arguments, is that embodiment theory is not the same as theory about the body (although it can encompass that). Embodiment is precisely about what can be in the body, or around the body, and can use the idea of the body as a locus of personhood. Sanders goes to deconstructionist theory for his own inspiration, suggesting that this is the way to bypass Euro-American ethnocentrism. Embodiment theory, however, is reconstructive: it enables us to take "the body" and set it into its historical and cultural contexts without also denying its ontological significance.

In our research we have found that the Mount Hageners have done the same with their subtle picture of noman as both of, and not of, an ethno-location in the physical body. Like the Ihanzu, they have their own social theory and their own epistemology. Grasping what they mean by their concept of noman can enable us to bypass the negativities of deconstructionist theory.

Sanders' treatment of his own ethnography shows clearly another point which is in line with our own view expressed above, that embodiment goes with emplacement. Persons and their bodies are certainly closely connected with the landscapes in which they dwell or through which they move. The Ihanzu life-world is bound up with rain and the problem of how to make it: gender itself is implicated with this problem and people's senses of themselves are bound up with a perception of a gendered cosmos. Emplacement takes different cultural forms, but the Ihanzu case falls into line with others. How people "see" their environment depends on their relationship to it. Farmers in Scotland and Ireland are as much concerned with "the weather" as Ihanzu farmers are, and the conventional theme of discussing the weather is a part of that whole process of adaptation and attunement that farmers must create for themselves in pursuit of their life-ways.

A further important component of this kind of emplaced embodiment is to be found in temporality, particularly what we have called "Now-Time" (see, Strathern and Stewart 2009). People live with perceptions of past, present, and future, variably conceptualized, and memory plays a significant role in senses of emplacement. Experience, however, is always a Now-Time creation or a memory of it. One of the effects of ritual is to create special segments of Now-Time that become encoded in memory, and the framing effect of ritual conduces towards this. The same is found in artistic products such as song and dances, as we have remarked on above. Indeed, in memory generally, experiences that have proved significant can become framed and preserved along with

verbal narratives that register them. And narratives of this kind are then amenable to being passed on in oral traditions among families beyond the generation of those who first had the experiences they refer to. Such narratives reach back to an earlier "Now-Time" and pull it into the present. In our current studies of the memories of diaspora populations of Scottish descent in the South Island of New Zealand, we have found that such narratives are tied up with perceptions of the landscape, in particular with comparisons between the landscapes where people's pioneer ancestors settled and the landscapes of Scotland which they had left behind. Place names may reflect these narrative memories and people go back to the origin places in order to renew the memories with visual impressions and recreate them for their children. For these same populations, preservation of the names of the ships on which ancestors came is also important, marking a mid-point between rupture and continuity, because shipping records are often one of the tools used for tracing ancestry itself. The ship itself becomes here like a moving locality, a piece of the original land brought to the new land.

Conditions of rupture test, and at the same time regenerate, memory. In our 2009–2010 fieldwork in Taiwan we were able to visit the site of a disaster that had wiped out considerable parts of a local village of the Paiwan people in south-eastern Taiwan. The people sought explanations for this disaster. They struggled with the challenges of living in temporary houses away from their own land. They dealt with dilemmas imposed on them, since aid to build the houses came from World Vision, and this Christian organization was doubtful about the people's wish to expel unquiet spirits of the dead following the disaster. They also wanted to hang on to their old land claims, and they recounted how they had been moved from their earlier mountainous lands first by Japanese colonial authorities. They argued with the government (or wished to) about the use of timber driftwood and large stones or boulders that had tumbled down with the flooding river that had caused the damage. The river's flood waters brought with them a matching flood of rumor, resentment, anxiety and senses of both continuity and rupture.

## Gossip, Rupture and Virtuality

Ideas of personhood are in general bound up with questions of rupture and continuity in life. Gossip and rumor play on these questions, operating within the zones of ambiguity and uncertainty that surround knowledge of other people. There is an assumption of continuity, in which "who you are" remains stable. But the revelations of further information may change that perception. In traditional mythologies this potential instability is mirrored in narratives of shifters and tricksters, and in general the imagination of spirits such as the female spirits of the Hagen and Duna areas in the Papua New Guinea Highlands represents the projection into the mythological and ritual domain of images drawn from experience. Csordas (2002: 265) has distinguished between simuloids, avatars, and shades, in his discussion of virtual realities associated with the Internet. Simuloids are technologically created images that have no intrinsic embodied counterpoint. Avatars are, Csordas suggests, "virtual incarnations of human actors" (2002: 265). The term itself is derived, he notes, from Hindu culture, in which an avatar is the incarnation of a deity in the shape of a human. The "virtual" use of the term, Csordas argues, inverts this original meaning, because it

amounts to an "apotheosis" of a human form into the realms of the imagination, including powers of shape-shifting – as in the traditional mythologies we have noted above. Csordas further uses the term "shades" to refer to the recreations of the faces of cadavers that are represented by images in cyberspace. All of these categories are plays about, and away from, embodiment. They also pose the questions of continuity and change, and it is interesting that the mythological worlds of film and media, enhanced by digital technology, have reached a point that meets exactly with the presentations of mythology found among the oral traditions of nonliterate peoples. Similarly, the question of who or what someone is is explored in stories about a person thought to be of commoner descent turning out to be chiefly and eliciting the sympathetic support of those who see through the apparent identity into the one that has been obscured or denied, as found in narratives of the Paiwan people of southern Taiwan (Egli 1989). Further research on embodiment and personhood as expressed in the domain of folk-tales would give rewarding insights into how temporality, change, and continuity are perceived in the cultural contexts from which these stories are generated; and this is one of the foci we have in mind for our ongoing research.

A crucial component of such folk-tales is often a cultural schema regarding the emotions. Much anthropological work has been done on the analysis of emotions and whether, like "color" categories, categorizations of the world in general, or cognitive schemata, the emotions are to be seen as universal or as culturally particular. Clearly, a combinative viewpoint is best, allowing for universal tendencies or patterns along with much intercultural variation. A widespread renaissance of classical studies centering on ancient Greece and Rome, and using anthropological methods of analysis, includes David Konstan's study *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks* (Konstan 2006). Konstan heads his chapters with terms such as Anger, Satisfaction, Shame, Envy, Fear, Gratitude, Love, Pity, Jealousy, and Grief, all of which have a ring of universality about them. In each case he finds something particular, and indeed at the outset of his work he indicates that he wishes to show differences in ancient Greek ideas "from our own" (Konstan 2006: x). He uses the writings of Aristotle as one of his guidelines, and notes, from Aristotle, the definition of anger as "a desire, accompanied by pain, for a perceived revenge" (2006: 41). This linkage of anger with revenge is interesting, partly because it may indeed have some universal component in it, and partly because it finds a parallel in Melpa concepts from Mount Hagen in Papua New Guinea, via the deep-seated idea of *popokl*, which can also be glossed as "frustration," and is considered a dangerous emotion that must be attended to carefully within social networks. Revenge killings in warfare in the past in Hagen were always conventionally attributed to this emotion (*popokl mondok eting*, "they made popokl to be and did it"), and popokl is located in the noman. Konstan's discussion (2006: chapter 4) of "shame" similarly provides many parallels with the extensive explorations of this complex of feelings in many Pacific Island cultures (see, e.g., the early studies in White and Kirkpatrick 1985).

Finally, here, one point that we have in general stressed in our own writings is the necessity to take a Heraclitean view of history and culture. If embodiment is at the heart of culture, as Csordas has argued, we must recognize that it will also register change. Notions of embodiment, then, will not only be culturally different in different places, but they will also change within places. In Mount Hagen Christian ideas greatly shifted the evaluation of anger, for example. Whereas, in a sense, anger as popokl previously had some positive perceived functions, because it could lead to

redressive processes, with Christianity it was denied this role, partly because of the stress on forgiveness. People's management of their embodied feelings would have to adjust to this induced form of change. Embodiment can thus be a sensitive register of change at both individual and collective levels of perception and analysis.

## "Everything Flows"

In conclusion, we have drawn out here numbers of ways in which embodiment and personhood are linked, and ways in which this perspective helps to define research questions or leads to new modes of analysis. One perennial arena of debate that we have contributed to in our writings is the question of individuality in cross-cultural contexts. Our view is that individuality is observably embodied in people, and variably embodied: whether it receives practical or ideological recognition is an issue determined by history, politics, and broader notions of the world or cosmos that people create. Certainly, in the field of creativity and improvisation, we find the clearest demonstrations of this point. Magical rituals might seem to be arenas of conservative practice, for example. But Maurizio Gnerre has intriguingly shown that this is not necessarily so, with his story of the shaman who heard about travel to the moon and incorporated this into his night-time session that evening (Gnerre 2009: 304–307). Examples of this kind reveal a pattern that is probably universal: human ingenuity at work, in endlessly recreated patterns.

## REFERENCES

Asad, Talal, 1993 Genealogies of Religion. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Bell, Catherine, 1992 Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bell, Catherine, 1997 Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1977 Outline of a Theory of Practice, trans. R. Nice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Csordas, Thomas J., 2002 Body / Meaning / Healing. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Egli, Hans, 1989 Mirimiringan. Zürich: Verlag Die Waage Zürich.

Gell, Alfred, 1977 Magic, Perfume, Dream. *In* Symbols and Sentiments. I. M. Lewis, ed. pp. 25–38. London: Academic Press.

Gnerre, Maurizio, 2009 "While I Sing I Am Sitting in a Real Airplane": Innovative Contents in Shuar and Achuar Ritual Communication. *In* Ritual Communication. G. Senft and E. Basso, eds. pp. 293–316. Oxford: Berg.

Grimes, Ronald, 1990 Ritual Criticism. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press.

Howes, David, 1991 The Varieties of Sensory Experience. University of Toronto Press.

Hymes, Dell 1964 Introduction: Toward Ethnographies of Communication. *In* The Ethnography of Communication, ed. John. J. Gumperz and Dell Hymes, American Anthropologist special publication 66(6), Part 2, pp. 1–34.

Ingold, Tim, 2000 The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill. London: Routledge

Johnson, Mark, 2007 The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Konstan, David, 2006 The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Kreinath J., C. Hartung, and A Deschner, eds., 2004 The Dynamics of Changing Rituals. New York: Peter Lang.

Lanman, Jonathan A., 2007 How "Natives" Don't Think: The Apotheosis of Overinterpretation. *In* Religion, Anthropology, and Cognitive Science. H. Whitehouse, and J. Laidlaw, eds. pp. 105–134. For, Ritual Studies Monograph Series, Durham, N.C. Carolina Academic Press.

Lutz, Catherine, 1988 Unnatural Emotions. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

McIntosh, Janet, 2009 The Edge of Islam. Power, Personhood, and Ethno-religious Boundaries on the Kenya Coast. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.

Sanders, Todd, 2008 Beyond Bodies. Rainmaking and Sense Making in Tanzania. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Seremetakis, C. Nadia, 1991 The Last Word. Women, Death, and Divination in Inner Mani. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Stewart, Pamela J. and Andrew Strathern, 1999 Female Spirit Cults as a Window on Gender Relations in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea. The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 5(3): 345–360.

Stewart, Pamela J. and Andrew Strathern, eds., 2000 Millennial Countdown in New Guinea. Theme issue of Ethnohistory 47(1).

Stewart, Pamela J. and Andrew Strathern, 2001a Timbu Wara Figures From Pangia, Papua New Guinea. Records of the South Australian Museum 34(2): 65–77.

Stewart, Pamela J. and Andrew Strathern, 2001b Humors and Substances: Ideas of the Body in New Guinea. Westport and London: Bergin and Garvey, Greenwood Publishing Group.

Stewart, Pamela J. and Andrew Strathern, 2002a Gender, Song, and Sensibility: Folktales and Folksongs in the Highlands of New Guinea. Westport and London: Praeger Greenwood Publishing.

Stewart, Pamela J. and Andrew Strathern, 2002b Part II. Gardening: Comparisons from Three Highlands Areas (Duna, Pangia, and Hagen). *In* Horticulture in Papua New Guinea: Case Studies from the Southern and Western Highlands. P. Sillitoe, P. J. Stewart, and A. Strathern, eds., pp. 199–338. Ethnology Monograph Series. No. 18. University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh.

Stewart, Pamela J. and Andrew Strathern, 2004 Witchcraft, Sorcery, Rumors, and Gossip. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Stewart, Pamela J. and Andrew Strathern, eds., 2005a Expressive Genres and Historical Change: Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Taiwan. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing.

Stewart, Pamela J. and Andrew Strathern, eds., 2005b Contesting Rituals: Islam and Practices of Identity-making. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.

Stewart, Pamela J. and Andrew Strathern, eds., 2009 Religious and Ritual Change: Cosmologies and Histories. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.

Stewart, Pamela J. and Andrew Strathern, n.d. Ritual: Key Concepts in Religion. Case Studies. London: Continuum.

Strathern, Andrew and Pamela J. Stewart, 1999 The Spirit is Coming. A Photographic-Textual Exposition of the Female Spirit Cult Performance in Mt Hagen. Ritual Studies Monograph Series, No. 1. Pittsburgh.

Strathern, Andrew and Pamela J. Stewart, 2000a Dangerous Woods and Perilous Pearl Shells: The Fabricated Politics of a Longhouse in Pangia, Papua New Guinea. Journal of Material Culture 5(1): 69–89.

Strathern, Andrew and Pamela J. Stewart, 2000b The Python's Back: Pathways of Comparison between Indonesia and Melanesia. Westport and London: Bergin and Garvey, Greenwood Publishing Group.

Strathern, Andrew and Pamela J. Stewart, 2009 Introduction: A Complexity of Contexts, a Multiplicity of Changes. *In* Religious and Ritual Change: Cosmologies and Histories. Pamela J. Stewart and Andrew Strathern, eds. pp. 3–68. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.

Throop, C. Jason, 2010 Suffering and Sentiment. Exploring the Vicissitudes of Experience and Pain in Yap. Berkeley: University of California Press.

White, Geoffrey and John Kirkpatrick, eds., 1985 Person, Self, and Experience. Exploring Pacific Ethnopsychologies. Berkeley: University of California Press.

CHAPTER 23

# POST-SOCIALISM
## *Troubling the Reproduction of the Nation*

*Michele Rivkin-Fish*

> "If the state is genuinely interested in increasing the birth rate, it must support women who decide to have a second child. The state should provide such women with an initial maternity capital that will raise their social status…"
>
> (President Vladimir Putin, Annual Speech to the Nation, 2006)

> "A reduction in the number of abortions can increase the birth rate by 20–30 percent. This is a real resource for the increase of fertility."
>
> (Tat'iana Golikova, Russia's Minister of Public Health and Social Development, 2010)

With the end of socialism, the body burst out of the strictures of state ideology to become a symbol of the possibility and necessity – of individualized subjectivity and strategies: a landscape of personal expression, a vehicle for sensual pleasures and new consumer capabilities, a commodity for realizing basic needs (Berdahl et al. 2000; Borenstein 2007; Farquhar 2002; Kideckel 2008; Petryna 2002). Alongside these processes and in part because of them, Russian state officials and activists concerned with the nation's body homed in on women's reproductive potentials as an object of grave political import. This chapter examines how their struggles to engineer higher fertility have projected the troubled and transforming social order on to individual reproductive practices, and generated policies for manipulating those practices to halt the nation's demise. With conceptual tools from the anthropology of embodiment

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

and reproduction, the chapter parses the logics shaping reproductive politics in the globalizing, nationalizing landscape of post-socialism.

In their classic manifesto for an anthropology of the "mindful body," Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Margaret Lock (1987) identified two theoretical interventions that are central to the task at hand: the symbolic analysis of the "embodied world," and the poststructuralist analysis of the "body politic." Training the ethnographic lens on the embodied world opens up insights into how cultural conceptualizations of bodily states refract broader visions of the social order and cosmos. The well-being or illness of persons is gauged through broader understandings that define the healthy (or sick) society, and conversely, assumptions of a failing, diseased society may get projected outward, shaping characterizations of individual persons. By examining how visions of the world get embodied at the site of persons, we collapse Western ideological representations that dichotomize the individual and society, mind and body, and gain access to the dynamics of cultural practices. A second anthropological perspective on embodiment moves beyond the project of revealing symbolic homologies between self and society, to raise questions about how bodies become sites of power, control, and governance. Focusing on situations of crisis, conflict, and social transformation, Scheper-Hughes and Lock highlight how the anthropological analysis of the body politic exposes the mutual constitution of symbolic and political processes:

> When the sense of social order is threatened … the symbols of self-control become intensified along with those of social control. Boundaries between the individual and political bodies become blurred, and there is a strong concern with matters of ritual and sexual purity, often expressed in vigilance over social and bodily boundaries. (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987: 24)

Faye Ginsburg's study of the U.S. abortion debate offers an thoughtful example of the insights this approach affords (Ginsburg 1998). She demonstrated how the American embodied world is a gendered social order replete with contradictions – differentiated by gendered spheres yet also egalitarian, it sacralizes the values of both nurturance and individualism. Abortion activism, in turn, entails the struggle to counteract perceived threats to the gender order that emerge when these contradictions become palpable. Opposition to abortion, for example, aims to keep the sphere of domesticity, nurturance, and motherhood intact and distinct from the sphere of the market place, commerce, and masculinity:

> In the pro-life view of the world, abortion destroys the bases of gender difference critical to biological, cultural, and social reproduction. It subverts the fertile union of men and women, either by denying procreative sex or the differentiation of male and female sexuality. This prospect threatens the union of opposites on which the continuity of the social whole is presumed to rest. (Ginsburg 1998 216)

Yet the symbolic distinction between a male public and female private stands in direct contradiction with another concept central to the American embodied world: that of the individual as the bearer of rights and equality (Ginsburg 1989: 218). We can thus see anti-abortion strategies to endow the fetus with the status of personhood – read:

individualism – as aiming to reappropriate a commitment to individual rights for abortion opponents while challenging the assumption that women are the foremost bearers of such rights (Morgan and Michaels 1999). Abortion activism strives to rein in perceived dangers to the American embodied world, transforming the body politic by restoring one or another component of the moral order.

The moral order at stake in Russia's reproductive politics, although also involving abortion, differs in notable ways from those in the U.S. Anxieties and activism in the post-socialist context generally focus on national vitality, defined increasingly through ethno-genetic terms and indexed through demographic trends. The policy measures for increasing fertility that President Vladimir Putin and Minister of Public Health and Social Development Tat'iana Golikova have endorsed presume that the state can and should engineer women's reproductive practices to align with national interests. The assumptions underlying these political moves are not new: for four decades, Soviet and Russian politicians, demographers, medical experts, and lay persons have read the reproductive body as a material embodiment of the troubled, transforming body politic. Concerns about declining fertility that emerged in the Soviet Union in the late 1960s acquired urgency in the aftermath of that country's collapse, as deaths exceeded births and panicked observers began warning that the Russian nation was now "dying out." As in the U.S., political attention to reproduction in Russia harbors anxieties over shifting forms of gender relations and uncertainty about the place of nurturance in an industrialized economy. At the same time, local observers trace the imprint of both the Soviet system and contemporary Russia on the ways women deploy and control their reproductive capacities, marking these reproductive practices reflexively as either signifiers of a harmful political-economic regime or, more rarely, a promising new social order.

This chapter examines how the reproductive body became variously interpreted as an embodiment of the Soviet and Russian political-economic systems, from the first concerns over the "demographic crisis" in the late 1960s to the present. Specifically, it focuses on the productive power that circulates around "the second child" and abortion in both clinical logics and domestic ones, in the arguments of demographic experts, and the platforms of politicians. Demographic and medical forms of surveillance, however, are not coterminous; nor are these forms of expertise coherent in themselves. Debates rage about the impact of both the Soviet system and market economics on the reproductive body. As we will see below, physicians may reject the political agenda of increasing fertility in favor of a logic that privileges medical judgment and authority over the appropriate use of women's reproductive capacities. Yet what otherwise distinct perspectives share is the assumption that how individual women manage their reproductive bodies holds significance not primarily as personal moral decisions but as forms of behavior that society has made possible – even likely – and that therefore represent a collective responsibility and arena of intervention. Demographers, medical experts, and nationalist activists consider the use of abortion and the quantity of children women bear as practical incarnations of Soviet and post-Soviet Russian societies as these reproduce themselves (or fail to do so). Inscribing societal forms on individual bodies legitimizes treating the body as a necessary terrain for political improvements of society – a concept that many politicians increasingly associate with the need to save the nation. The implications for women are grave.

## Abortion, the Second Child and Medical Power: An Ethnographic Prelude

The calm in the prenatal ward of a St Petersburg maternity hospital was disturbed one November day in the mid 1990s, while I was conducting fieldwork to understand how women and physicians managed their lives and reproductive health following the trying collapse of state socialism. The respected obstetricians who ran the ward, Nina Petrovna and Natalia Borisovna, burst into their office engrossed in a fervent discussion. With exasperation, Nina Petrovna explained that Irina, a patient in the second trimester of pregnancy, had been admitted that morning due to the imminent risk of miscarrying and wanted the physicians to save the pregnancy. Nina Petrovna was furious at the request, for Irina suffered from serious, chronic asthma and a heart condition. Not only might the pregnancy end in miscarriage, but was likely to endanger Irina's life as well:

> The woman has asthma, has done tests for hematology but there are still no results, she had a serious case of kidney disease. She's in danger of hemorrhaging. She's in a state of euphoria, she had a C -section the first time she gave birth, and will have one now too. And this is with the same husband! I can understand if it's not, OK, you want to strengthen the family, but I cannot understand why you'd give birth again in this condition with the same husband.

On talking with Irina and investigating the circumstances of her pregnancy, the physicians found out two social factors which they regarded as relevant for determining the medical procedures she should receive: Irina already had one child, and this pregnancy was conceived with the same husband as the first child. My confused face conveyed to the doctors that I had lost the logic of their argument. "Why does it matter if this is the same husband or not?" I asked. Natalia Borisovna spelled out the situation: "Look, if it's a second marriage, the husband often wants a child of his own, and then maybe it makes sense to take the risk. But this is the same husband as with her first child. What does she need this baby for?!" Nina Petrovna provided an answer to this rhetorical question by rolling her eyes and holding her hands in the air as if imitating a bird flying: "She's in a state of euphoria. She's up there in the clouds, in blissful denial of the reality of her physical condition."

Embedded in the physicians' logic was the assumption that the needs of relationships motivate women to give birth: one needs a baby to solidify a marriage. In this moral economy of decision making and risk, the physicians recognized that in certain cases it may be necessary to attempt to bear a child under dangerous circumstances. Thus, upon first learning about Irina's health problems, Nina Petrovna expected that she had probably just gotten remarried and "needed" to create a "new family." But given the fact that Irina was still with her first husband, and had multiple medical complications, the doctors declared it a huge mistake to try to bear another child. They considered her actions to be utterly unreasonable.

I went to Irina's room to find out her perspective on the pregnancy, her needs, and the health care she was receiving. Contrary to the doctors' perceptions, Irina was quite aware that her health was compromised. She told me she had planned her pregnancy, taking out the IUD she had had inserted after her first child was born four years earlier. Upon conceiving, she immediately quit her job and was being assisted

full time with the housework by her mother, who retired early in order to help her daughter. Meanwhile, Irina's husband found a second job to augment the family's income given the loss of the two women's salaries. The family recently moved out of one room in a communal apartment into a two-room apartment of their own. Enumerating these details to me, Irina asserted that her family was more than able to raise a second child.

Five months later, I visited Irina in her a spacious apartment in a pre-revolutionary building in the heart of St. Petersburg. When I asked about what happened that day at the maternity hospital, Irina described Nina Petrovna's rudeness. She also described how the doctor urged her to terminate the pregnancy:

> She spoke to me using *ty* [the familiar form] and not *vy* [the formal form], and said, "Have you gone out of your mind?" Since I don't work, I'm eligible for welfare services, and that's recorded on my medical history. It's written that I'm unemployed. So she said to me, "Who's supporting you to bear this child? We can give you a miscarriage if you want."
>
> So I said, "No, I came here in order to save this pregnancy." And then she said to me, "What, is your husband running around? Are you trying to hold together your marriage?"
>
> I took that comment as a joke, but then I saw that they were serious. They said to me, "You're not being serious."

The conflict at the heart of this encounter reveals one of the prominent dynamics underway in the Russian clinic: the intense struggle between physicians and patients over who gets to define appropriate uses of the reproductive body and what such uses can entail. The obstetricians presumed authority to weigh in and pressure women to make certain reproductive decisions based on their medical expertise; but as is clear from their interactions with Irina, they assessed women's *social* circumstances in determining whether they would support and care for a pregnancy. The physicians considered their medical knowledge as relevant and sufficient for defining the right course of action women should take. Yet clearly their logic involved a multidimensional calculus, intertwining medical, social, and gendered reasoning about the conditions that make particular risks "reasonable." Had Irina's pregnancy been undertaken as the first child of a second husband, they would probably have supported her decision to pursue this birth and not encouraged a termination. They believed the social goal of "making a new family" or "keeping a husband" warranted risking severe health complications or even death through pregnancy; but they could imagine no other motivation as legitimate. The rationality of bearing a second child was contingent on a particular woman's interpersonal, economic, and health circumstances *as defined by experts.*

The physicians' anger at Irina stemmed from more than their disagreement with her decision about this pregnancy. They read her refusal to defer to their expertise as reflecting the lingering harms of the Soviet past lodged in many laypersons' consciousness. In numerous conversations we had about women who challenged their medical evaluations and recommendations, the physicians explained this trend as a symptom of the broader failings of the Soviet system to socialize laypersons to comply with medical authority. They saw Irina as typical of the vast majority of their women patients and patients' families – as lacking the necessary "level of culture" to allow

medical expertise to guide their decisions. As Natalia Borisovna put it, "Our system has told women, 'You know better than doctors.' For 70 years they said, 'Doctors are stupid.' " With a dose of sarcasm, she continued:

> Read that wonderful magazine, *Zdorov'e* ["Health," a popular magazine published by the Ministry of Public Health, MRF]. These are very bad from the doctor's point of view. We think women should go to the doctor, but she reads these books, and she gets illegal medicine without a prescription, and she performs all sorts of treatments herself; or, she'll go to the doctor but she won't take the medicines. Doctors can never know whether a woman is taking the medicine. The doctor studies ten years and should know what medicine a woman should take. But the woman thinks that she knows better than the doctor. She has no trust in doctors.

Irina explained the physicians' push for an abortion as stemming from their insecurities and unwillingness to take responsibility for her complicated case. Interestingly, the physicians partly echoed Irina's interpretations. Nina Petrovna and Natalia Borisovna continually expressed umbrage at having to work without adequate institutional support from their hospital administration or legal protections from the public health system. Complex medical cases aggravated their sense of isolation and apprehension. They saw the imprint of the Soviet health care system inscribed across Irina's case, from the patient's exasperating belief that deferring to doctors was unnecessary, to the maddening professional and personal vulnerability it raised.

Notably, the physicians' urgings for Irina to terminate the pregnancy because she did not "need" a second child contradicted the pronatalist thrust of state politics, which avidly encourage women to bear second children and desist from abortion. This case highlights a broader logic at work among clinicians – the desire to distinguish medical logics from state and church politics, to separate the concerns of medical expertise from the concerns of national demographics, and, most importantly, to establish medical logics and authority over the reproductive body as *trumping* the logics and authority of political leaders. Their unwillingness to promote the state's demographic agenda in their clinical practice reflects a historical logic of resistance to Soviet ideology that framed medicine as "science," and therefore as outside of politics. It demonstrates the diverse interests at stake in groups' struggles to gain symbolic and material control over the reproductive body in Russia.

And still, like the demographers and politicians they oppose, the physicians read the particular decisions a woman made about continuing or terminating a given pregnancy, as well as the specific ways she related to her physicians and did or did not take care of herself, as reflecting the traces of Soviet society on her mentality and her bodily practices. They saw women as carrying Soviet history into the present through the ways they deployed their reproductive capacities. And as they negotiated and battled with their patients, they understood themselves as struggling against this lingering Soviet system (Rivkin-Fish 2005).

## The Shifting Biopolitics of Pronatalism in Soviet History

Two important modes of conceptualizing reproductive practices emerge in this ethnographic vignette: physicians' ability to see abortion as a routine, expected procedure for

managing pregnancy, and their ability to see the second child as an exception, a nonroutine event requiring certain conditions to be in place to be justified. In the following section, I trace the history of these assumptions, including the broader ideological and structural circumstances that made them possible to think and the more recent campaigns that have attempted to denaturalize them. As will become clear, demographers and politicians have long understood reproductive practices as outcomes of the (troubled) socio-economic organization. As the character of socialist society came into question, various groups made reproductive practices emblematic of that society's problems and the focus of broader plans for societal improvements; their arguments, and the politics they endorsed for transformations, reflect the historical formations through which knowledge about reproduction was produced under socialism – a pronatalist logic that continues today.

From their country's inception, Soviet leaders considered a moderately growing population to be both a sign of geopolitical strength and a domestic necessity for fulfilling the labor needs of the socialist economy. Ideologically, they declared that no reason existed for families to limit fertility, given that the Soviet system guaranteed all citizens' "material needs." Moreover, during the first decades of the Soviet Union, the country suffered repeated, severe population losses due to wars and famines, compounded by the Soviet Union's catastrophic losses in World War II and the purges, which together cost the lives of well over 20 million people. The state thus considered historical and contemporary population trends to be an issue of serious political concern; yet its efforts to ensure pronatalist outcomes have involved shifting forms of biopolitical governance.

During the early period of Soviet history, until Stalin's death in 1953, the state largely treated the reproductive body as a mechanical vessel: women's reproductive potentials and achievements were measured in terms of productivity and output as any other factory object, and similarly manipulated through material interventions (Hyer 1996). The criminalization of abortion, which Stalin implemented in 1936 and which lasted until Khrushchev reversed it upon coming to power in 1955, exemplified the effort to engineer higher fertility rates mechanistically, that is, without working to cultivate women's ideologies, commitments, or perceptions of their interests. Women refused and resisted this coercive pronatalism, resorting to illegal abortions in mass numbers and often dying in the process. The brief fertility increases (from 33.6 per 100,000 population in 1936 to 39.6 in 1937) reversed soon thereafter and did not substantially rise again throughout the entire twentieth century (Lorimer in Popov and David 1999: 238).

Khrushchev legalized abortion to stem the maternal mortality resulting from its widespread underground and unsafe use, but his long-standing commitment to pronatalist goals (Nakachi 2006) led him to intensify the "fight against abortion" and not promote contraceptives. Officially published health promotion literature depicted abortion as a harmful procedure often causing secondary sterility, and a shameful decision comprising the "rejection of motherhood." The envisioned alternative to abortion was for women to give birth, rather than prevent unwanted pregnancy. Yet the population viewed fertility control as a necessity. With abortion the most accessible means for achieving this goal, the state assured the procedure's normalization, even as official rhetoric continually denounced the practice as a social wrong. Notably, demographic indicators revealed that the majority of abortions were undertaken by

married women who had at least one child already. The Soviet framing of abortion as a "rejection of motherhood" elided this fact. The disconnect between official discourse and women's own understandings and experiences of abortion undermined the state's integrity, as public health discourse appeared completely out of touch with the practical constraints of women's lives.

Nonetheless, it is important to highlight that Khrushchev and later Soviet leaders undertook important shifts in their modes of biopolitical governance, opening up a space for experts to examine and debate the various forces that affect reproductive behavior and outcomes. Demographers and sociologists led the way, undertaking numerous surveys throughout the Soviet Union between the late 1960s and late 1980s to investigate women's "ideal" and "expected" number of children, and to inquire into the reason that disparities existed between them. In analyzing these data, demographers applied one of two opposing theoretical paradigms to explain why women were limiting their fertility: the first highlighted the impact of poor material conditions, the other blamed women for insufficiently valuing family life (Rivkin-Fish 2003). Scholars focusing on material conditions argued that women had fewer children than they wanted because they found it so burdensome to manage both work and home responsibilities under cramped housing conditions, with few amenities, and demanding work hours. They argued for policies that would improve families' housing, provide women with part-time work options and longer maternity leaves to raise the birth rate.

In 1987 the pronatalist demographers A. I. Antonov and V. M. Medkov published their study, *The Second Child*, in which they repudiated the argument that poor material conditions caused lower fertility (Antonov and Medkov 1987). They noted that populations with higher levels of education, higher social-professional levels, higher incomes, and native Muscovites were more likely than poorer groups to have only children (1987: 243). Indicting these privileged groups for their presumed interest in selfish, consumer interests rather than family life, the authors traced these values to the contemporary socio-economic structure, in which childbearing no longer had an economic basis. The state should not allow childbearing to undertaken for "purely personal motives," they urged, for this was an unreliable foundation for population growth; "society's interests" could certainly be undermined (Antonov and Medkov 1987). The authors urged state officials to promote family values and a desire for three or four children in youth, while simultaneously transforming socio-economic relations to make larger family sizes economically profitable. In this and later writings, Antonov continually argued for a state demographic politics targeted at the systematic creation of moral and material stimuli for mid-size families, including housing, credit and financial allowances, and family-values education.

With glasnost,' as inconsistencies in the Soviet order became widely exposed and hypocrisies unmasked, the social mood became infused with both excitement and trepidation (Ries 1997). Following the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991, the euphoria of societal openness gave way to a period of massive political upheaval and socio-economic rupture. Russians endured a profound, chaotic unraveling of societal stability and personal security. Public health indicators registered these dislocations throughout the 1990s: the total fertility rate fell from 1.89 in 1990 to 1.17 in 1999 (Vishnevskii 2002: 36), and infectious diseases, from tuberculosis and diphtheria to

syphilis and HIV, skyrocketed. Simultaneously, male mortality rose dramatically, with men's life expectancy falling to less than 60 years of age (Field et al. 2000). Russia's net population decline persisted from 1992 until 2009 – a trend reversed by increased immigration to the country (Abelsky 2010).

Conservative politicians, the Orthodox Church, and pronatalist demographers portrayed these trends as the unfolding catastrophe of national demise, formidable signs that the Russian nation was physically "dying out" (and, in less common but highly anxiety-ridden claims, being threatened by invading ethnic others). Yet politicians and activists devoted little attention to either the effects of premature male mortality on negative population growth, or to strategies for reducing the factors associated with these early deaths, including alcohol-related trauma, violence, and suicide. Instead, deploying a strategy common throughout Eastern Europe at the time, they seized on abortion and declining fertility as fertile signifiers for launching political agendas and demonstrating their concern for the nation (Gal and Kligman 2000). These gendered demographic symbols were given various meanings: For newly invigorated Church leaders and sympathizers, abortion was the embodiment of the illegitimate Soviet regime, with its atheistic, material approach to human (and fetal) life; for Communist and nationalist opponents of transition, abortion and the shocking declines in fertility were evidence of the disastrous effects of market reforms on the Russian nation. Resentful and suspicious of the Western influences flooding the Russian political, economic, and cultural spheres, nationalists impugned nascent family planning programs as the conspiratorial strategies of foreigners to brainwash Russians against childbearing (Babasyan 1999; Molodtsova 1999; *Novaia Gazeta* 1999).

The discourse on demographic catastrophe mobilized a series of biopolitical interventions. The Communist Party attempted to impeach Boris Yeltsin on the grounds that his economic reforms perpetuated the "genocide of the Russian people," an alarmist language that linked low fertility to the threatened Russian "gene pool." The Duma convened a session on family planning as an issue of "national security" and eliminated state funding for contraceptive services. Simultaneously, nationalists identified another new demographic trend – the expanding migration of non-Slavic ethnicities into and throughout Russia – as a serious threat to the social order (Karpenko 2010). The tone of debate was fearful, hostile, and accusatory. When liberal demographers advocated addressing the demographic crisis by attacking premature male mortality *instead* of increasing fertility, vociferous conservatives accused them of being traitors with "anti-patriotic" aims (Khorev 1997). These pronatalists and nationalists advocated biopolitical interventions to promote the birth of second children and attacked abortion, as defensive measures for the embodied world under siege.

## The Second Child as Exception

With the media constantly monitoring the persistent decline of the population and casting this trend as Russia's unfolding national catastrophe, public discourse was filled with calls for immediate pronatalist policy measures. When the Russian economy rebounded in the mid 2000s, politicians looked for ways of revitalizing Soviet-era family support programs and creating new ones – symbolic and material vehicles for

conveying the state's concerns for families and the fate of the nation. In October 2005, the Speaker of Russia's Federation Council, Sergei Mironov, asserted:

> The economy should be demographic. A complete family with several children, and not a separate worker, should be used as the basis of all social and economic calculations. In other words, inasmuch as the economy exploits the resources of the family, government and private enterprises are obligated to give back to the family everything that is necessary for its life and growth. To pay back the debt" (*Literaturnaia Gazeta* 2005).

In this biopolitical blueprint for increasing fertility, changes to society's economic organization would reshape family structures in line with state goals. Accepting this logic, in 2007 Putin inaugurated the national "maternity capital" entitlement for mothers who have given birth to a second or third child. It provides the mother a voucher equivalent to about $10,000 US, when the child turns three years old, usable for the purchase or improvement of an apartment, a contribution to the woman's pension savings, or for the child's education costs. As a nod to the legitimacy enjoyed by Soviet-era family support programs, maternity capital enabled Putin to assert the state's commitment to women, families, and the nation. Implicitly, it affirmed pronatalist visions of the only-child as the problematic outcome of a societal order that failed to provide adequate economic support to its citizens; it conveyed hope that by transforming the dysfunctional socio-economic chaos of the Soviet and post-Soviet eras, the state can ensure the higher fertility necessary for the nation's future prosperity. Yet as feminists have pointed out, family support motivated by pronatalist goals, rather than gender equity concerns, essentializes women as mothers and ensures that opportunities for women's social mobility and economic autonomy remain limited (Gapova 2006; Rivkin-Fish 2005).

This pronatalist agenda has not gone uncontested. Liberal Russian demographers have portrayed the maternity capital policy as a continuation of paternalistic, Soviet-era tactics that fail to address the actual issues underlying low fertility, including the need for opportunities to balance work and family responsibilities, and gender inequalities (Get'man 2010). Conceptualizing low fertility as a universal feature of socio-economic development related to modernization, these scholars define modern families as partnerships structured around romantic love and gender equity, the pursuit of personal goals and the struggle for socio-economic mobility. Childbearing is undertaken for emotional rewards and personal fulfillment, an option requiring extensive parental investment. Consequently, they consider state policies as unlikely to significantly raise fertility. Moreover, they argue that recent trends in which some young Russians are postponing the onset of marriage and childbearing, taking up contraceptive practices and deliberately planning pregnancies after obtaining economic stability, represent signs that the Western form of modernity has begun to impact society: the constraints and possibilities of market economics have begun to "rationalize" the country's family-formation processes by altering individual psychology and reproductive behavior. Irina's narrative of having deliberately planned her second pregnancy echoed this perspective, although it is notable that her ability to do so stemmed from extensive family support and comfortable economic circumstances – enabling conditions that liberals' celebration of market reforms tends to ignore (Rivkin-Fish 2003). Still, these liberal accounts have resisted discourses of the threatened body politic, advocating

instead for policies that may reduce premature male mortality and facilitate migration as strategies for reversing Russia's population decline. Undergirded by the universalizing visions of modernization theory, this biopolitical strategy has radically recast the embodied world materialized in Russia's low fertility as a hopeful achievement. And it remains a marginal and contested vision. With Russia's political leadership preoccupied with ensuring the nation's continuity in ethno-genetic terms, alternatives that detract from the goal of actively promoting increased fertility remain highly suspect.

## Abortion as a Routinized Societal Ill

In talking with me about their reproductive histories, Russian women often mentioned having had abortions without expressing regret or trauma. Yet in critically considering the Soviet system, many pointed to the normalization of abortion as an embodiment of its inhumane, barbaric social order. Vera Aleksandrovna, Irina's 50-something year old mother, responded to my question about the prevalence of abortion by angrily demanding "Do you know what a communal apartment is?" "Yes, I've been in them," I humbly replied, recalling the characteristic form of housing that symbolized the inadequacies of Soviet life. Her response recalled the traumas many suffered from having living quarters that were experienced as prisons, in which an entire family was crowded into a single room, required to share a kitchen and bathroom with other residents whom they could neither choose nor evict. "We don't reject childbearing," she continued. "There are no other choices." Vera Aleksandrovna interpreted my question, "Why do women in Russia have so many abortions?" as echoing long-standing state discourses that equated abortion with a rejection of motherhood; she countered by redefining abortion as the product of the Soviet system's pervasive economic deprivation. Some of my younger friends, however, invoked global anti-abortion discourses. One of these women, a gynecologist who terminated her second pregnancy while married to a physically and verbally abusive man, described her decision as a demoralizing act of "murder" in a situation where she had no other choice. When I objected to this equation of abortion and "murder," she insisted that the Soviet system's failure to acknowledge this moral framing exemplified its broader illegitimacy.

My landlady used another metaphor to describe abortion, "the meat grinder" [*miasorubka*]. Soviet hospitals and clinics provided abortions in large wards with no privacy, one after another, all day long. Horror stories abound about the procedure being provided without anesthesia in a kind of institutional effort to treat women who "rejected childbearing" punitively. These associations between abortion and a meat grinder, and abortion as motivated by the communal apartment, present a metonymous field of associations for the Soviet system itself. The degrading, often torture-like conditions under which abortion was provided, combined with public discourses blaming women who aborted for selfishness and an undeveloped commitment to family life, made abortion an embodiment of institutionalized hypocrisy – emblematic of the *state's* failures to create conditions in which people can "do the right thing."

For women who came of age in the post-Soviet era, contraceptive use has become widely normalized. Yet a new form of symbolic violence also emerged, in which women who made repeated use of abortions get cast as backward, Soviet in their

mentality and bodily practice. The new, post-Soviet woman, by contrast, is imagined as sexually knowledgeable, desiring, in control of her body's reproductive potentials and purposefully planning her sexual and reproductive life (Temkina 2009: 53). Associating abortion with the discredited and backward Soviet past, young Russian women have not championed it as either a right or a health care need. It has become an issue of concern and contestation almost exclusively for nationalists and pronatalist activists who perceive the need to defend the national body. Restricting the availability of abortion has become a key means of policing the embodied world.

Indeed, both the legal framework establishing abortion access, and the paths towards its erosion, reflect the blurring of bodily and national boundaries. The Soviet and Russian Ministries of Public Health have conceptualized pregnancy termination through a classification system that distinguished "types" of abortion based on how women accessed the procedure. This classification also provided the basis of regulation, as possible. The list includes self-induced, legally induced (at the woman's request, up to 12 weeks gestation), medically indicated, criminal, socially indicated (those past 12 weeks), "mini-abortions" (performed before six weeks through vacuum aspiration) and those with unknown sources. The law further established women's varying rights to these abortion categories: "Each woman has the right to make the decision about motherhood independently. The artificial termination of pregnancy is provided on the woman's demand up to 12 weeks of pregnancy, for social reasons up to 22 weeks pregnancy, and in the case of medical indicators and with the woman's agreement, without regard to the time of gestation" (Ballaeva 1998: 37). Social reasons established in 1987 by the Soviet Ministry of Health included the severe injury or death of one's husband, divorce, incarceration of the woman or her husband, loss of parental rights, having three or more children already, and pregnancy resulting from rape. In 1996, the Russian Ministry of Health tacitly acknowledged the exacerbation of economic hardship among the vast majority of Russians amidst post-Soviet reforms, and expanded the list of acceptable "social reasons" to include a woman's unmarried status, homelessness, refugee status, a disabled husband or disabled child to care for, loss of the woman's or her husband's job, and having a salary lower than the minimum living standard for one's region (Mishle 1998: 356). In line with pronatalist logics, these regulations conveyed a vision of abortion as the embodiment of the failing socio-economic order at the micro-level.

Importantly, socially indicated abortions – those motivated by circumstances related to poverty and social marginalization– increased by almost three times in the first decade of post-socialism, from .8 percent of all registered abortions in 1992 to 22 percent in 2001 (Sakevich 2003). Yet in 2003 and again in 2007 soon after Putin inaugurated his new pronatalist agenda, the Russian Ministry of Health and Social Development eliminated most of these criteria for accessing second-trimester abortions, leaving only rape and incest (Pravitel'stvo RF 2003). Ninety-two previous medical criteria for accessing second-trimester abortions were also eliminated, including mental retardation, alcoholism, and personality disorders (Papyrin 2007). Moreover, new disciplinary measures were introduced: clinics were now required to persuade women against abortions and those who persist must attest in writing that they understand the procedure's possible negative consequences (Ivanov 2007). The state's interventionism has also generated extensive brainstorming for innovative "persuasion" tactics against abortion. One economics scholar, for example, deplored the fact

approximately 2.5 million "people" are "killed" annually by abortions. While he did not endorse criminalizing the procedure (as many others have), he argued for pronatalist measures to encourage as many births as possible. These included instituting a tax on married couples without children, an insurance policy against infertility, public financing of IVF and other reproductive technologies for any woman who cannot conceive otherwise, as well as a host of social welfare interventions:

> granting young women aged 16–19 who agree to deliver a baby the opportunity to temporarily reject the child after it's born, while maintaining the right to get the child back until it reaches 10 years of age; Creating a data bank of men who have divorced because of their infertility, enabling those of them who are willing to marry [single] pregnant women; Supporting research and development into the transplantation of embryos from pregnant women [who do not want the pregnancy] to women who want to get pregnant (Gudkov 2008).

If more creative than many proposals, this set of recommendations typifies the biopolitical logic increasingly at work in contemporary Russia – where the state deploys its technological resources, surveillance power, and persuasion tactics to prevent abortion – after a pregnancy has been established. The narrow concern with increasing fertility – rather than promoting reproductive health for its own sake – has generated a starkly instrumentalized vision of women, men, and children. With the individual body a microcosm of the threatened nation, it can be rendered a useful biological-demographic tool for pursuing state needs.

## Conclusion

In the later years of socialism and especially after its collapse, the reproductive body became a vehicle for realizing what conservative critics disparaged as "purely personal motivations" (Antonov and Medkov 1987). And while construing this situation as threatening the interests of the nation and state, it is notable that these "personal" decisions have also been viewed as structured by broader societal forces. While Russian physicians, demographers, and women themselves often disagreed on public policy and the meaning of reproductive practices, they also shared a vision of the reproductive body as embodying Soviet or contemporary Russia's socio-economic organization. These social orders have been understood as leaving their traces on persons' mentalities, behaviors, and relationships, distorting them with their hypocrisies, deprivations, and sometimes, reforming them through newly promising disciplines. For pronatalists, blame for low fertility lay in an economy that made childbearing unprofitable and therefore undesirable; for liberal demographers, the onset of childbearing at later ages could be credited to a modernity that induces couples to undertake rational deliberation and calculated economic planning, a positive indicator progress and development. And while the physicians' notion that women resort to abortion because of their "low level of culture" and disrespect towards expertise entailed a judgment about women's backwardness and even moral inferiority, they too placed ultimate culpability on the Soviet system. Indeed, reproductive practices have not generally been treated as the enactment of autonomous individuals' (im)moral decisions. Rather, women's use of their procreative capacities get read as material

embodiments of the socialist past, its turbulent collapse, or the complex, marketizing developments of the socialist aftermath.

Understanding the biopolitical strategies emerging in reproductive politics requires insights into the embodied world deemed to be in crisis. While it is perhaps not surprising to Euro-American thinkers that semiotic and political struggles get materialized on the terrain of reproductive bodies, understanding why specific strategies unfold as they do requires careful ethnographic and historical insights. Indeed, although globalized discourses and formations impact local reproductive politics, the particular issues at stake in a given context also refract local historical and rhetorical configurations; the possibilities of pursuing emancipatory politics at either the clinic level or through the channels of statecraft also resist universal design. Thus, with abortion widely framed in the US as a personal moral decision, anti-abortion activists cast the decision to continue an unplanned pregnancy as the achievement of nurturance, a social and moral good (Ginsburg 1998: 110). But with that presumed nurturance narrowly envisioned as an individual responsibility, the reproductive body becomes again problematic when its productivity requires economic support from the state. In Russia, neither teen pregnancy nor state support for poor mothers who are outside the labor force engage public attention. The presumed personhood of the fetus has only recently emerged as a rhetorical tactic for abortion opponents. Most frequently, experts and politicians scrutinize the patterns through which women control their number of children, conceptualizing the individual reproductive body as the kernel of national well-being or the seed of the nation's demise.

It is exceedingly difficult in this context to produce a feminist logic of opposition to pronatalism. On the one hand, family support appears to be a benevolent means of state assistance for long-struggling parents and children, and so the gender politics of maternity capital often appear benign. The language of individual autonomy holds little cultural resonance in this context, while feminist discourses differentiating women's interests from those of the family get depicted as highly dangerous refusals of national interests (Antonov and Sorokin 2000). Nor, as we have seen, does expert "support" for abortion necessarily express respect for women's autonomy and self-defined interests: it can be a means of enforcing normative models of acceptable reproduction that contravene women's sense of their own needs. In this complex historical and socio-political arena, the defense of abortion access generates minimal enthusiasm. Some physicians and liberal demographers have warned that restrictions on the procedure, as Soviet experience amply revealed, will only drive the procedure underground and harm women. Their tactics involve dismantling the equation between fewer abortions and increased births. Facing accusations of betraying their nation, they struggle against the weight of history's structured silence to justify the importance of contraception.

## REFERENCES

Abelsky, Paul, 2010 Russia Ends 14 Years of Decline in Population on Immigrants. Bloomberg February 18, 2010. Reprinted on Johnson's Russia List 18 February #33, No. 5.

Antonov, A.I. and V.M. Medkov, 1987 Vtoroi Rebenok. Moscow: Mysl'.

Antonov, A. and S. Sorokin, 2000 Sud'ba sem'i v Rossii XXI veka: Razmyshleniia o semeinoi politike, o vozmozhnosti protivodeistviia upadku sem'i i depopuliatsii. Moscow: Graal'.

Babasyan, Natalya, 1999 Freedom or "Life": Secular and Russian Orthodox Organizations Unite in a Struggle Against Reproductive Freedom for Women. Izvestia, February 26: 5. Reprinted in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, 51(12): 4, 6.

Ballaeva, E. A., 1998 Gendernaia ekspertiza zakonodatel'stva RF: Reproduktivnye prava zhenshchin v Rossii. Moscow: Proekt gendernaia ekspertiza MTSGI.

Berdahl, Daphne, Matti Bunzl and Martha Lampland, eds., 2000 Altering States: Ethnographies of Transition in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Borenstein, Eliot, 2007 Overkill: Sex and Violence in Contemporary Russian Popular Culture. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Farquhar, Judith, 2002 Appetites: Food and Sex in Post-socialist China. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Field, Mark, David M. Kotz, and Gene Bukhman, 2000 Neoliberal Economic Policy, "State Desertion," and the Russian Health Crisis. *In* Dying for Growth: Global Inequlity and the Health of the Poor. J.Y. Kim, J.V. Millen, A. Irwin, and J. Gershman, eds. pp. 155–173. Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press.

Gal, Susan and Gail Kligman, 2000 The Politics of Gender after Socialism. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Gapova, Elena, 2006 Vy rozhaite, vy rozhaite, vam zachtetsia. Grani.ru http://grani.ru./opinion/p.106127.html

Get'man, Natal'ia, 2010 Rozhat' Segodnia… i ne Rozhat' Zavtra. Ekspertnyi Kanal 'Otkrytaia Ekonomika' 3 March. http://www.opec.ru/1212849.html

Ginsburg, Faye, 1998 Contested Lives: The Abortion Debate in an American Community. updated 2nd edition. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Golikova, Tat'iana, 2010 Demografiia s pliusom. Rossiiskaiia gazeta. January 19. Reprinted on http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2010/0409/lisa01.php (accessed November 22, 2010).

Gudkov, Andrei, 2008 Bol'she novykh rozhdenii Vedomosti January 17. Available at http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2008/0317/gazeta09.php (accessed November 22, 2010).

Hyer, Janet, 1996 Managing the Female Organism: Doctors and the Medicalization of Women's Paid Work in Soviet Russia During the 1920s. *In* Women in Russia and Ukraine. Rosalind Marsh, ed. pp. 111–120. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ivanov, A., 2007 Demografiiu popraviiat, zapretiv aborty. Kollektivnoe Deistvie November 6. http:ikd.ru.

Karpenko, Oksana, 2010 Teaching "Ethnic" and "National" Differences: The Concept of "Narod" in Russian School Textbooks. *In* Dilemmas of Diversity After the Cold War: Analyses of "Cultural Difference" by US and Russia-Based Scholars. Michele Rivkin-Fish and Elena Trubina, eds. pp. 193–217. Washington, DC: Kennan Institute.

Khorev, Boris, 1997 V chem ostrotademograficheskoi problemyv rossii? Rossiia 1 Mir (Informatsionnyi ekspress biulleten' dlia deputatov Gosudarstvennoi Dumy) Communist Party of the Russian Federation no. 135(269, June): l–45.

Kideckel, David A., 2008 Getting By in Postsocialist Romania: Labor, the Body, and Working-Class Culture. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Literatunaia Gazeta, 2005 Zhdat' nel'zia: Partia ZHIZNI prizvala politicheskie i obshestvennye sily ob''edinit'sia vokrug demograficheskoi politiki. October 5. Reprinted on http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2005/0217/print.php 10–23 October 2005.

Mishle, Nadezhda Aleksandrovna, 1998 Iuridicheskii spravochnik: zhenshchiny i deti: semeinoe pravo, trudovoe pravo, sotsial'nye l'goty. Moscow: Filin'.

Molodtsova, Viktoria, 1999 Seks: Razvrashchenie vmeste prosveshcheniia. Rossiiskaya gazeta, June 26, p. 8. Reprinted in CDPSP 51(24): 14–5.

Morgan, Lynn and Meredith W. Michaels, eds., 1999 Fetal Subjects, Feminist Positions. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Nakachi, Mie, 2006 N. S. Khrushchev and the 1944 Soviet Family Law: Politics, Reproduction, and Language. East European Politics and Societies 20(1): 40–68.

Novaia Gazeta, 1999 Planirovanie nebytiia. August 30–September 5, p. 1.

Papyrin, Aleksei, 2007 Shtoby abortov stalo men'she. Meditsinskaia gazeta, November 7, www.demoscope.ru / weekly / 2007 / 0309 / gazeta09.php 2007.

Petryna, Adriana, 2002 Life Exposed: Biological Citizens after Chernobyl. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Popov, Andrej and Henry P. David, 1999 Russian Federation and USSR Successor States. *In* From Abortion to Contraception: A Resource to Public Policies and Reproductive Behavior in Central and Eastern Europe from 1917 to the Present. Henry David, ed. pp. 223–77. Westport: Greenwood Press.

Pravitel'stvo R. F., 2003 Postanovlenie. O Perechne Sotsial'nykh Pokazanii dlia iskusstvennogo Preryvaniia Beremonnosti. August 11, No. 485. Reprinted in Demoscope Weekly No. 123–124, August 25–September 7, 2003. Available online at www.demoscope.ru / weekly / 2003 / 0123 / tema03.php (accessed November 22, 2010).

Putin, Vladimir, 2006 Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russia Federation, May 10. www.kremlin.ru / eng / text / speeches / 2006 / 05 / 10 / 1823_type70029type82912_105566.shtml (accesed November 22, 2010).

Ries, Nancy, 1997 Russian Talk: Culture and Conversation during Perestroika. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Rivkin-Fish, Michele, 2003 Anthropology, Demography, and the Search for a Critical Analysis of Fertility: Insights from Russia. American Anthropologist 105(2): 289–301.

Rivkin-Fish, Michele, 2005 Women's Health in Post-Soviet Russia: The Politics of Intervention. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Sakevich, Viktoria, 2003 Naselenie i obshchestvo. Elektronnaia versiia biulletenia, Tsentr demografii i ekologii cheloveka, Instituta narodnokhoziaistvennogo prognozirovaniia RAN No.75, September http: / / www.demoscope.ru / acrobat / ps75.pdf.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy and Margaret M. Lock, 1987 The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work in Medical Anthropology. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 1(1): 6–41.

Temkina, Anna, 2009 Novyi byt, seksual'naia zhizn' i gendernaia revoliutsiia *In* Novyi Byt v Sovremennoi Rossii: Gendernye Issledovaniia Povsednevnosti. Elena Zdravomyslova, Anna Rotkirch, and Anna Temkina, eds. pp. 33–67. St. Petersburg: European University of St Petersburg.

Vishnevskii, A. G., ed., 2002 Naselenie Rossii 2001. Deviatyi ezhegodnyi demograficheskii doklad. Moscow: Institut Narodnogo-khoziaistvennogo prognozirovaniia RAN.

# CHAPTER 24 RACIALIZATION
## *How To Do Races With Bodies*

*Didier Fassin*

> "It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels this two-ness – an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps from being torn asunder."
>
> (W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folks*)

In the late 1990s, France discovered the existence of racial discrimination. Racism was indeed not a novelty in the post-colonial Republic, but until then it was considered to be a cognitive issue (prejudices) circumscribed to ideological margins (the far right) and violent extremes (hate crimes). Racial discrimination by contrast represented an objective fact that did not need intention, concerned society as a whole, and occurred in ordinary contexts (Fassin 2002). This late discovery led the Socialist government to develop policies for the prevention, measurement, and sanctioning of racial discrimination. A new legislation was passed to make it easier for victims of unequal treatment to be recognized as such in courts. A national commission was created to develop expertise and propose recommendations, but also to provide concrete responses to these victims. In particular, a telephone hotline collected their testimonies and informed them about their rights.

During the first two years of its functioning, the "listeners" who had been recruited specifically to receive the complaints handled 86,000 phone calls. From the interviews I conducted with them, I learned that they had been trained to answer the victims with discernment but also sympathy, which meant that they were supposed to explore the evidence of racial discrimination without ever seeming to dispute its reality. Even if the listeners had doubts about the stories they were told, they were expected not to

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

express them but rather to display a form of empathetic understanding. This was the deontological foundation of their "listening" to the frustrations and sufferings of presumed victims of racial discrimination. Actually, quite often, when requested to explain why they interpreted having been refused an apartment, a job, or a career progression as a consequence of racial discrimination, these victims fell short of arguments and would simply reply: "I can't tell you, I just feel it." Asked what they thought about these situations, the listeners gave me two sorts of answers. Some admitted that, although they did not want to indicate it to the person calling, they were not convinced of the existence of discrimination: "Maybe the same thing could have happened to someone else, independently of the color of the skin." Conversely, others asserted that, when hearing such assertions, they were intimately persuaded that their interlocutors on the phone had been treated unfavorably because of their racial ascription: "I believe them, because I know what they experienced." The two groups were significantly different. The first one was exclusively composed of listeners whom one could reasonably guess from their appearance and biography that they had never been victims of discrimination, whereas in the second one all had histories and phenotypes that made a previous confrontation with racism very likely.

My point is not to ascertain who was right and whether the acts for which individuals expressed subjective certainties rather than objective proofs did correspond to racial discrimination, but to acknowledge the fact that some listeners shared with these callers a common comprehension of the social world while others did not. This difference of interpretation is not merely intellectual. It is not easily accessible to rational demonstration: one cannot determine who was right or wrong, whether in a specific case racial discrimination was constituted or not. Rather, it is deeply embedded in a bodily experience: we can call it racial embodiment. But a crucial point must be underlined here, as there is often misinterpretation. Racial embodiment does not only concern those who had the intimate conviction of the reality of the discrimination. It also affects those who did not believe in it. To use more explicit language, it is about blackness as much as it is about whiteness. Whether made visible (in the case of Blacks) or kept invisible (in the case of Whites), the body is the site of the racial experience.

However, associating "body" and "race" is not self-evident. It is all the more problematic since it seems to be taken for granted that they are intricately linked. From at least the second half of the 19th century – but some would go back to the end of the Middle Ages – to almost the end of the 20th century – many would probably say even until now – there has been a sometimes explicitly racist (in the French and English theories of biological races or in the North American and South African politics of racial segregation) but more often implicitly racialist (in the everyday language) view that assimilated racial differentiation to physical or biological differences (Guillaumin 1995). The body was therefore apparently the obvious signifier of race as well as its ultimate evidence – attested by science and the state. Of course, real life was more complex and there remained disquieting moments of indistinctiveness, when an individual was assigned a new racial identity, interestingly on a social rather than phenotypical basis (Posel 2001), or when an entire group was categorized under a novel racial qualification, such as the Jews or the Irish in the United States (Brodkin 2006 and Ignatiev 1995). But these hesitations hardly impacted the general and vague assumption that made racialization rely on bodily attributes.

Yet, as is frequently the case with commonsense certainties, science introduced various complications to this racial order of things. On the one hand, social scientists, particularly sociologists, argued that race was no more than a social construction to justify power relations (Omi and Winant 1986), even if this construction of imagined categories had practical consequences on the production of real groups (Bonilla-Silva 1999). On the other hand, natural scientists, including physical anthropologists, asserted that there could be biological differences between so-called races that could only be interpreted as social (Dressler et al. 2005), even going so far as demanding a repudiation of racial classification in medicine (Root 2001). From this multiple questioning of the association between body and race, and of the assimilation of racial differentiation to physical or biological differences, it emerges that it is not just the relation that is seen as problematic, but also its very elements. Both body and race have become suspect of reification – of being considered as given. Suspicion has indeed a distinct orientation for the two entities: whereas races would not exist, the body would have a too obvious presence. But in the end, for both of them, it is the risk of essentialization that is underlined, some authors even calling for their elimination from our conceptual toolbox. A question remains however: can we do without them?

Can we merely disintegrate the notion of the body when it is through its materiality that we apprehend the world? And can we completely abandon the language of race when people are stigmatized or even killed on this basis all over the globe? One way of accepting the critiques without getting rid of the ideas is to think in terms of process. Instead of considering the body, one may analyze embodiment (Csordas 1994). Rather than talking about race, one may study racialization (Miles 1989). This is the venue I will follow in this text, attempting to account for the processes through which races are embodied and bodies are racialized. These processes may be brutal or subtle, destructive or reconstructive. They may result in genocides (Hinton 2002) or everyday racism (Essed 1991), but also in consciousness (Gilroy 1993) and empowerment (Collins 1990). I chose the anecdote of the hotline to introduce the discussion because it contains a hidden violence (the banality of racial discrimination, the racial divide among the listeners) as well as revealing a remarkable tension (the shared negative experience of racial stigmatization being reversed into a form of positive racial recognition). A final remark about this anecdote: to keep a certain degree of indetermination that is part of the process under study, I did not mention the color or origin of the listeners (it appears in the end that some may be socially closer to their interlocutors than to their colleagues). Thus, what seemed to be a simple objectification of subjective complaints through telephone interviews (is the interlocutor racially discriminated?) becomes a collective ordeal, which symmetrically produces a complex subjectivation of objective situations expressed in social interactions (the history and position of the listener influences its recognition of racial discrimination). Needless to say, the anthropologist himself cannot elude his own bodily presence in this game of racial unveiling: he is entirely part of it.

In the following pages, I will explore the links between embodiment and racialization in two distinct and complementary ways. First, I will analyze via a sociological conjugation how bodies become racialized. Second, I will propose an anthropological interpretation of how races become embodied. Having shown the plurality and thickness of these phenomena I will suggest that recognizing not only their social complexity but also their moral ambivalence is the only way to repoliticize the production of identity and otherness.

## How Bodies Become Racialized: A Three-Persons Approach

How does racialization come to human beings? To this question, answers have recently been proposed from phylogenetic as well as psychogenetic perspectives. The former have attempted to explain through evolutionary biology how racial categories emerged among ancient populations (Andreasen 2000), while the latter have tried to analyze through cognitive psychology how children developed racial thinking at an early age (Hirschfeld 1997). My contribution to this debate is more modestly, and in a less positivist way, to propose a sort of sociogenetic interpretation based on a grammatical model. To give a sense of it, one could recall the first lines of Frantz Fanon's famous text "The Fact of Blackness" (1967: 109), the original title of which, literally "The Lived Experience of the Black Man," reflects more adequately his intention. The Caribbean-born French psychiatrist evokes the discovery of his racial identity: "'Dirty nigger!' Or simply, 'Look, a Negro!' I came into the world imbued with the will to find a meaning in things, my spirit filled with the desire to attain the source of the world, and then I found that I was an object in the midst of other objects (…) 'Mama, see the Negro! I'm frightened!' Now they were beginning to be afraid of me. I made up my mind to laugh myself to tears, but laughter had become impossible." Thus Fanon's self-identification as a "Black Man" derives from his encounter with "White folks," and more specifically from this primitive scene in a train when a White boy designates him as a "Negro," that is, not only an exotic curiosity but also a frightening creature.

Paraphrasing Jean-Paul Sartre's famous formulation about the killing of a colonizer in his preface to *The Wretched of the Earth* (Fanon 2004), one could say that the ascription to one's skin color produces two racial subjects with one sentence: the one who is assigned to his blackness and the one who, by assigning, reveals his whiteness. "My body was given back to me sprawled out, distorted, recolored, clad in mourning in that white winter day." At this very moment, it becomes racialized. "Assailed at various points, the corporeal schema crumbled, its place taken by a racial epidermal schema. In the train it was no longer a question of being aware of my body in the third person but in a triple person." Somewhat diverting this enigmatic final expression. I would like to seriously consider the three persons paradigmatically present on the racial scene (Fassin 2010): on the first person (the speaker), *I* ascribe a racial qualification. On the second person (the addressee), *you* recognize yourself as racialized. On the third person (the observer), *he* accounts for the racial interaction. Let us examine the three figures in more detail.

Ascription is the foundational act through which racialization is produced. It is the imposition of difference. "I am overdetermined from without. I am the slave not of the 'idea' that others have of me but of my own appearance," explains Frantz Fanon. In his hospital, he is not just a psychiatrist: "Our doctor is colored. He is very gentle," comment his patients. Fanon is viewed as Black before being seen as doctor. He does not have the choice of who he would like to be or how he would like to be seen by others: he is taken back to his skin color, his ancestors, his "race." A physician is not expected to be Black (Essed 2005). Racial ascription thus supposes that I identify you as other – racially other. It could be assumed that this identification is only very marginally a problem: everyone should be able to differentiate a Black individual from a White individual, one would think. Interestingly, not only is this not always the case, but it appears that racial qualification significantly depends on social status: when

considering how people are classified by interviewers in repeated surveys conducted in the United States, it has been established that "individuals who are unemployed, incarcerated or impoverished are more likely to be seen and identify as Black and less likely to be seen and identify as White, regardless of how they were classified or identified previously" (Penner and Saperstein 2008), which indicates that racialization integrates physical features and social characteristics.

The general implications of this observation are important. First, it is not a natural process: it is naturalized only a posteriori. Second, it is not fixed once and for all: on the contrary it is fluid. Surely what is true in formal situations such as coding "race" in a survey is even truer in informal situations such as interactions with other individuals in everyday life. Racial ascription is always also a social assignation: the youth in Brixton, south London, have to face prejudices against blackness – even when they are not Black (Howarth 2002). Similarly the rich Kuwaiti shopping on the Champs-Elysées is not identified as an Arab in the same way as the young man of Algerian descent in a disadvantaged neighborhood of Paris. And this difference is not only a question of representation: it has serious concrete consequences, for instance in terms of police harassment. In other words, both the possibility and the meaning of racial ascription vary according to status and context.

This process of racial assignation always exerts a form of symbolic violence upon those who are ascribed (Bourdieu 2000). "I wanted to be a man, nothing but a man," writes Frantz Fanon. Instead he finds himself reduced to the color of his skin and to the attributes associated with it. "I was walled in: No exception was made for my refined manners, or my knowledge of literature, or my understanding of the quantum theory." Ascribing someone racially is therefore not only imposing an identity upon him: it is also depriving him of possible alternative identifications, including the mere possibility of multiple belongings:

> The same person can be, without any contradiction, an American citizen, of Caribbean origin, with African ancestry, a Christian, a liberal, a woman, a vegetarian, a long-distance runner, a historian, a schoolteacher, a novelist, a feminist, a heterosexual, a believer in gay and lesbian rights, a theater lover, an environmental activist, a tennis fan, a jazz musician, and someone who is deeply committed to the view that there are intelligent beings in outer space with whom it is extremely urgent to talk (preferably in English) (Sen 2006, p. xii).

The moral meaning of identity imposition is, however, not univocal. Although it is an act of authority – I know who you are better than you do – racial assignation does not necessarily imply a hierarchy or an evaluation: racialization can be a mere description (Hacking 2005). Yet it is very frequently the case that racial ascription involves a judgment upon the racialized other. This moral evaluation usually takes a negative form: disqualification and stigmatization may serve to justify discrimination, exploitation, oppression, or even extermination (Bauman 1992). But it can also adopt a positive expression: valorization of difference may then result in paternalistic attitudes and sometimes segregation policies (Fassin 2011). Whatever moral orientation it follows, ascription is always an abuse of power: in this sense, it is political.

Recognition is a response to ascription: you identify through the assignation I am imposing on you. Being called a Negro, Frantz Fanon recognized himself as what he was ascribed to: "I resolved, since it was impossible for me to get away from an inborn

complex, to assert myself as black man." But the process is contradictory: "Since I was not satisfied to be racialized, by a lucky turn of fate I was humanized. I joined the Jew, my brother in misery." Here, recognition becomes resistance. Recognizing oneself as Black means resisting racial ascription. Hence Fanon's rejection of Leopold Sédar Senghor's and Aimé Césaire's *negritude* which, according to him, contributes to the essentialization of difference and the reproduction of inequality. From this perspective, Black is no longer a phenotypical feature (the color of the skin) but a political qualification (shared by all minorities).

Actually, the Black movements in Britain and South Africa included so-called "Asians" and "Indians," respectively, because they were suffering from the same racial discrimination as the people of African descent: the "master-signifier 'Black' "was a "bridging term that promoted vernacular cosmopolitan conversation and synchronized action among the victimized" (Gilroy 1987: 14). Without underestimating the divisions within these movements and the ambiguities of the claims of blackness, one should therefore be attentive to the potential challenge it offers to the contradiction often described within the politics of justice: fighting for cultural identities would imply requesting a right to difference and thus the abandonment of the universalist ambition of social equality; this contradiction has been coined as the "redistribution-recognition dilemma" (Frazer 1997: 13). The risk does exist. But for minorities, insisting on the common victimization through discrimination and exploitation, self-identification as "Black" can simultaneously promote difference and equality. Rather, it founds a political project on recognition through universal rights. This is the paradox of all minority struggles: they must use the weapon of the enemy to denounce its violence and reject its relevance (Scott 1996). From this perspective, claiming blackness is paradoxically challenging race.

These tensions within the political realm are also present in daily life, although they are probably less evident. If "the Jew is one whom others consider a Jew" and if "it is the anti-Semite who makes the Jew" (Sartre 1995: 69), then three attitudes can theoretically be expected for those ascribed to "Jewishness" or to any form of racial assignation accompanied by prejudices: to ignore or pretend to ignore the ascription; to reject it and adopt the stigma as an instrument of combat; to internalize it and even to overplay the role that is imposed. The three options do not necessarily correspond to a real choice. First, they are often associated. Second, they are context-dependent. In the interviews I conducted and situations I observed with French people of African or Arab origin in France, I have always been struck by their apparently rapid change of position from claims of color-blindness to claims of color-consciousness, from denouncing racial assignation to affirming racial identity. Like the author of a humorous essay that became a best seller (Kelman 2003), they could accuse someone of discrimination for essentializing their difference and, a moment later, proudly assert this difference. In fact there was no – at least no necessary – contradiction. They simply wanted to decide for themselves who they were and to choose when they would identify and to whom. This could lead to self-ascription as a minority ("I'm Black and I'm proud") or sometimes as belonging to the majority ("I'm White whatever you think I am"). Thus, in spite of their being physically and culturally very close to the other peoples of Lebanon, the Maronites allege that they are White, and stigmatize the Druze on the basis of "racial fantasies" (Hage 2005). Symmetrically, processes of "deracialization" have been described, for instance among African American boxers in

a Chicago gym (Wacquant 2005). Recognition can therefore occupy a wide moral range from the reversal of the stigma to the reinforcement of discrimination or the repudiation of racialization.

Ascription and recognition are therefore intimately linked in what Anthony Appiah (1996) analyzes as "identification." The existence of racial categories and racist prejudices as well as the production of racialized rules, laws, customs, surveys has profound consequences on the sociology and psychology of minorities – and of majorities – providing them a concrete existence not as racial entities but as social groups which are identified by others but also self-identified. Drawing on Ian Hacking's dynamic nominalism (1991), this theoretical model is an attempt to articulate the constructionist and realist positions, the interpretation of race as a social construct with the acknowledgement of the social effects of such construction.

Going further, one can consider how ascription and recognition work in a dialectic way. On the one hand, ascription is a form of subjection: it imposes a truth on someone who does not have his word to say about it. It is a symbolic subordination. Louis Althusser (1971) proposes to interpret ideology through the image of the "interpellation": the individual anonymously hailed by the police turns around, thus acknowledging his being the person hailed. "Thus ideology interpellates individuals as subjects." In the same way, Fanon is hailed by the child – as well as a series of others – and, although he initially attempts to dismiss his assignation by laughing, he cannot avoid becoming a passively racialized subject. Ascription is an act of domination. But on the other hand, recognition works as a form of subjectivation: even under conditions of oppression, there is the formation of a subject. It is a political advent. Michel Foucault (1982) suggests that power not only constraints action but also produces "subjectivities": although it was the case in Ancient Greece and in Medieval Christianity, it is even truer in modern biopolitics where resistance may emerge from the new forms of the exercise of power. In the citation herein, Fanon seizes from his racial assignation the moral resource to defend a conception of blackness that rejects the color line and develops an emancipatory condition with other victims of discrimination. Recognition becomes an act of liberation. This tension between subjection and subjectivation (Butler 1997) is at the heart of the racialization process at the first and second person. But there is a third one.

Objectification is a third term complementing subjection and subjectivation. It supposes the existence of a third party who observes, comments, narrates, analyzes or measures the racial scene. He is the witness. He can be a journalist or a sociologist, a statistician or a politician. Although often forgotten by most works on racialization, he plays a crucial role in qualifying the process and giving it a public life. If it is possible "to do things with words" (Austin 1962) – one could add "and also with figures" – racialization usually comes into being in the public sphere through this third party. A critique frequently aimed at social scientists is that they produce race by naming it, defining it, classifying people according to it, and in the end proposing means to combat it (Webster 1992). In France, over the past decades, it is surprisingly not racism or racial discrimination that has caused controversies, but racial statistics, in other words the possibility of using racial characteristics to analyze and eventually correct social inequalities based on racial prejudices (Fassin (Eric) 2010). Beyond the polemical arguments exchanged, these debates underline the fact that objectification is part of the process of subject production, both as subjection and as subjectivation.

On the one hand, it can impose categories on individuals, sometimes provoking embarrassed or hostile responses: examples have been numerous with census (Prewitt 2005). On the other hand, it can reveal realities until then unseen even by the victims of discrimination or stigmatization, all the more by the beneficiaries of the racial order: evidence also comes from literature (Morrison 1992). Objectification is therefore performative (it makes racialization exist), but it is not univocal: it contributes to this process in potentially contradictory ways (reinforcing divisions as well as empowering individuals). There is thus no neutrality in objectifying racialized interactions or conditions – not even when pretending to ignore them.

## How Races Become Embodied: A Two-Dimensional Reading

How do racial differentiations and constructions make it into human bodies? This interrogation was at the heart of John Howard Griffin's famous social experiment (1961): adopting the appearance of a Black individual through an artificial pigmentation of his skin, he tried to comprehend the experience of being Black in the American South. The journalist assumed – or at least seemed to – that the superficial change would give a sense of a more profound reality: that of racism. Recently the same idea served as the inspiration for a 2007 French documentary by Renaud Le Van Kim under the same title as the French translation of Griffin's book: *Dans la peau d'un noir* (literally: Within the skin of a Black man). The film follows two couples, one White and the other Black, who reverse their identities in order to demonstrate the banality of racial discrimination: "racism, you don't talk about it, you live it," comments the director. Using makeup, they alter their physical appearance and face a series of situations including renting an apartment, searching for a job and being stopped by the police; every evening they get together and compare their experiences, two of which deserve special attention.

The first scene involves a conversation between the four adults: the White man and woman who pass as a Black couple are indignant; they have spent part of the day within a small organization of people of color who meet regularly to discuss their experience of discrimination. Initially, one thinks they are exasperated as they realize the level of racism that exists in French society; but soon, one understands that in fact they are angry at the members of the group for what they consider a caricature of White people and even a paradoxical expression of Black racism. The second scene takes place at a dinner in a high-class restaurant in Paris: the White woman made up as a colored one and her real Black counterpart request a table on the ground floor near the terrace; although the restaurant seems empty, they are informed that all tables are reserved and are placed alone in a small room on the second floor. The Black woman comments to her companion that this response is undoubtedly due to their skin color; the White woman replies that she is being paranoid, that the first floor is certainly booked and that there is no reason to interpret the situation in terms of discrimination; as they go out of the restaurant a little later, they discover two White males from the film crew sitting at a table on the ground floor despite not having a reservation; the White woman is deeply shocked and expresses her indignation, but her Black companion calms her: "it would do nothing, but you see, this is what we are used to, for us it's always like that." This scene is inserted at the end of

the documentary as the crowning piece of this unveiling of racial discrimination and unmasking of its denial.

Beyond the anecdote, this film – as well as the public success it had at a moment when France was finally admitting the existence of racial discrimination, which President Jacques Chirac had two years earlier called "the poison of the Republic" – illustrates important issues of the embodiment of racialization. The seminal idea of Griffin's book and of Le Van Kim's documentary is that one can share and comprehend the experience of Black people by making up as Black: race would thus be a question of skin color. The apparent naïveté of this idea is revealed in the film when the false Black persons dissociate themselves from the real ones of the organization by inverting the accusation of racism on to them (first scene), and when the real Black woman comments to the false one that she should not get angry because what she just experienced is for her simply discrimination as usual (second scene). The denial in the first case underlines that embodiment is not the superficial experience of the disguise: not only does the makeup not give access to the understanding of racism, it can even participate in its dismissal. Following Freud's distinction between "disavowal" (the refusal to embrace the consequences of something perceived as disagreeable) and "negation" (the formulation of an unconscious wish in a negative form), one could say that racial denial oscillates between the two: from mere repudiation of reality ("I know Black people are treated differently, but this is not discrimination") to its recognition in a negative form ("you are going to think that we White people discriminate against you, but you are wrong"); this dual interpretation can be generalized to French society (Fassin 2006). The acknowledgement in the second case demonstrates that embodiment does not proceed from isolated external events: it is their accumulation and their internalization over time that give a sense of discrimination. Following Dilthey's distinction between "experience" (the passive endurance of events) and "an experience" (the singular events rising above the everyday), one could say that the recognition of discrimination derives alternately from the flow of time and from moments of revelation: the ordinary experience gets crystallized in specific events (Turner 1986). In light of the two scenes, it becomes clear that racial embodiment cannot be reduced to skin color: it involves the thickness of the body.

But is there an ultimate truth to racism and discrimination? In the case of this documentary, the question becomes even more relevant when one takes into account that the White couple later took a legal action against the film director: they accused him of having selected the most negative scenes while ignoring the positive reactions of people, and of having pushed them to exaggerate and even provoke their interlocutors in order to create violent interactions; these accusations are, however, biased and even suspect, since the lawsuit relied precisely on the claim that they were used as actors but not paid as such. In its complexity and artificiality, this configuration – the film, its success, its contestations, and its political background – is a useful reminder of the multiple layering of the empirical material on which social scientists work (Bruner 1986): on a first level, there is the "reality" of what happened and why (was there actual discrimination?); on a second level, there is the "experience" of what people perceived of the reality (did they feel discriminated?); on a third level, there are the "expressions" that translate this reality and this experience into words, images or actions (did they depict themselves and react as victims of discrimination?). The judge who has to decide on a case of presumed discrimination is only interested in the

"reality." The person who is confronted with discriminatory practices against minorities is primarily concerned with his "experience." The film-maker who attempts to sensitize the public to the problem of discrimination is essentially working on "expressions." But the social scientist does not choose. He tries to articulate the three levels: constructionist, he must not forget yet that discrimination is also an effective means of domination; realist, he should however recall that experience is not merely a mirror reflecting facts; empiricist, he has nevertheless to consider that most of the time reality and experience are communicated through performances, whether a complaint, a narrative or a movie.

The body is precisely where the three dimensions are articulated: the violence of racialization is exerted, experienced and performed through the body. How to account for it? How to make sense of the top-ranked South African official who, at the end of a heated discussion on a public health issue with a specialist of the domain, short of arguments, angrily shouts at her: "You cannot understand because you are white"? Does this mean that there are different ways of apprehending the world according to one's color or origin, but then also to one's class, sex, profession, cultural capital, etc.? These interrogations are at the heart of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's thought (2004: 73, 76 and 93). "The world is not what I think, but what I live through," he writes, further adding – against Sartre: "Because we are in the world, we are condemned to meaning and we cannot do or say anything without its acquiring a name in history." In other terms, the world is not exterior to me: it is what I perceive of it and this perception is embedded in history but also constitutes history. What makes the world exist is therefore the body, which is the site through which the world comes into being within its spatial and temporal frame: "The body is the vehicle of being in the world, and having a body is, for a living creature, to be intervolved in a definite environment, to identify oneself with certain projects and be continuously committed to them." From Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* (1962), I would like to import two crucial elements into my discussion of embodiment and racialization. First, the intertwining of the objective and subjective body: against a purely objectivist view, one must recall that the apprehension of the world is always the fact of a subject; against a merely subjectivist vision, one should bear in mind that the physicality of the body is what makes perception possible. Second, the inscription of the body in time: the present of the world is informed by the past of previous states of the world; perception is always remembrance.

In his last writings, collected by his disciple Claude Lefort and published under the title *The Visible and the Invisible* (1968), Merleau-Ponty further expands his reflection through the themes of the "flesh" and the "chiasm" which are ultimate attempts to articulate the subjective experience and the objective existence, the present and past of the body. However, one should not misinterpret – or over-interpret – his thought. The Husserlian approach he remained faithful to all his life is more concerned with the immediacy of perception than with the *longue durée* of human history, with sensory facts (tactile or musical experiences, in particular) than with social forces (oppression or exploitation, for instance). In this sense, his philosophy is more accurate when applied to the understanding of the experience of Christian charismatic movements (Csordas 1990) than when translated into the issues of embodiment and racialization. Rather than a mere translation, I would therefore like to suggest a free extrapolation from Merleau-Ponty's theories. My work published under the title *When Bodies*

*Remember* (Fassin 2007) is definitely not an exercise in phenomenology. It should rather be read as a tentative political anthropology. South African contemporary history, and more specifically the issue of AIDS, is in effect a textbook case to understand what I suggest to analyze as a two-dimensional interpretation of racial embodiment (Fassin 2008). The controversy raised by the heterodox statements of former president Thabo Mbeki about poverty rather than a virus being the cause of the epidemic has highlighted the necessity of anthropological analyses going beyond mere denunciations.

The first dimension may be called the social condition of race. The use of the word "condition" can be seen as a legacy of Hannah Arendt's book (1958) on the "human condition," especially for its articulation of labor, work and action in the *vita activa*, but by contrast with her theoretical frame, I want to insist here on the social differentiation of conditions rather than on what they have in common. The social condition of race relates to the inscription of social structures of racialization on and in bodies, that is, to the physical traces left by centuries of domination, segregation, and stigmatization – from the early colonial period in the 17th century to the imposition of the apartheid regime in the second half of the 20th century. The epidemiology of HIV provides a tragic illustration of this reality as the so-called African population is affected by seroprevalence rates up to ten times higher than the Whites, Colored or Indians, to use local categories. This substantial difference has been both naturalized and culturalized: sexual promiscuity and sexual violence have been considered as typical African features alternately interpreted as inscribed in the genes or in the traditions of "native" populations.

In fact, ethnographical as well as historical studies have established that the epidemic should rather be understood in terms of "political economy" and "structural violence," as it was the case in other contexts such as Haiti (Farmer 2004). So-called sexual promiscuity and sexual violence form part of an historical process in which inequality and poverty, oppression and discrimination have relegated Africans to living under conditions of extreme economic and social constraints. The organization of the mine, industrial and agricultural system has been based not only on the brutal exploitation of African people, but also on the concentration of the work force in hostels and barracks combined with the installation of alcohol and prostitution facilities. The impoverishment of the countryside and the separation of families based on racial criteria have simultaneously led to the development of socioeconomic strategies among young African women which include their migration to the cities and their involvement in what is sometimes described as survival sex. Neither the African men nor the African women in these settings were simply choosing their lives, or "behaving as Africans": they were acting under profound structural constraints, which reveal the "intersectionality" (Crenshaw 1993) of race, class and gender.

The second dimension can be designated as the historical experience of race. However, my interpretation of the concept of "experience" is somewhat different from John Dewey's (1998), whether one considers its psychological or aesthetic version. Although I recognize as he does the introspective as well as performative meaning of experience, I am not so much interested in the individual aspect as I am in the inextricable relation between the individual and the collective. The historical experience of race corresponds to the way people, both individually and collectively, make sense of and give shape to events and situations through which they are racialized and racialize

others. Again, the AIDS epidemic has revealed the gap between the remarkable efforts to move the nation beyond its racist past and the depth of the frustrations left by the unfinished business of justice to sanction crimes committed and repair harm done. Whereas most Whites, both liberal and conservative, plead, although for different reasons, for oblivion and turn their eyes toward the future, a great majority of Africans remain in demand of memory and look back into the past. This racially divided relation to time, between forgetfulness on the one hand and resentment on the other, is revealing of the persisting significance of race in South Africa beyond the proclamation of the rainbow nation.

The heretical statements of the President and his Health Minister have been mostly interpreted in psychological and pathological terms (from cynicism to paranoia). But these interpretations are in no way sufficient to account for the fact that several years after the beginning of the controversy, as the government was discredited among the White national elite and the Western international community, a majority of Africans remained not only faithful to their leaders but also satisfied by their AIDS policy. Actually, the grievances of history are all the more painful and enduring because the racist past remains alive in the present, as it is also the case for the cholera epidemic in Venezuela (Briggs 2003). Conversely to what is often stated or believed, resentment is not only engendered from the morbid remembrance of things past, but from the present experience of racism and discrimination. The advent of a small wealthy and arrogant African upper class should not occult the overwhelming reality of an African underclass whose numbers are increasing. The bodily experience of racialization, which produces "communities of ressentiment" (Das 2007: 211), is therefore both the psychic wound of past violence and the physical expression of a tragic present.

Certainly, the South African situation is unique. But rather than considering its exceptionality, we should be concerned by its exemplarity. It is a useful national paradigm to think about the embodiment of racialization. My analytical proposition of a two-dimensional phenomenon is a tentative articulation between Merleau-Ponty's objective and the subjective bodies (what I formulate as condition and experience, respectively), but it moves beyond his phenomenology on two crucial elements. Firstly, I consider the role of social structures to be central in embodiment. The "habitus," which Pierre Bourdieu (1977: 72) defines as "systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures," provides a concept to understand how what is naturalized or culturalized as behaviors, is in fact deeply influenced by embodied dispositions that make conducts appear as natural or cultural when they are, to a great extent, socially determined. Secondly, I underline the importance of historical memories in bodily constructions. The "space of experience," which, according to Reinhart Koselleck (2004: 272), is "present past, whose events have been incorporated and can be remembered," allowing "a rational reworking together with unconscious modes of conduct," proves helpful to comprehend how what seems not to make sense and was psychologized or even pathologized, can find a signification in the light of history, especially from the perspective of the vanquished.

Considering racialization in both its objective and subjective dimensions thus provides a "thick description" (Geertz 1973: 6) of the body now embedded in social structures and historical legacies. As I have shown in the South African case, what I mean by thickness has to do with more than conducts and actions, representations

and interpretations: it involves the materiality of bodies. The racial epidemiology of HIV in South Africa affects individuals physically at risk, it involves infected and suffering bodies. Similarly, the racial ideology of AIDS mobilizes not only an imaginary about the past but the continuation of yesterday's oppression and domination in today's marginalized and stigmatized bodies often left untreated and finally abandoned. This is an important point: Black people invoking the trauma of the slave trade in America or colonial exploitation in Africa are often dismissed, especially when they request reparation, on the argument that the past is passed and their demands do not make sense several generations after these events. This is to forget or neglect the fact that in most cases the disadvantaged of today's social order are the heirs of the victims of yesterday's racial violence. The embodiment of racial memory is not a metaphor.

## Conclusion

A century after their publication, W. E. B. Du Bois' illuminating observations (1994: 2) about "double-consciousness," cited in the epigraph of this chapter, remain a remarkable entry into the question of embodiment and racialization, recalling how social relations – in particular the way people look at, talk to, behave with, treat others – shape racial identities. But no less remarkable is the fact that this question continues to be both sensitive and complex. It is sensitive, especially among anthropologists who often consider with understandable suspicion but excessive precaution the rare scientific efforts to conceptualize racialization as a social phenomenon (Cowlishaw 2000). It is complex, since it implies to articulate obvious biological and physical features with less evident cultural and political issues, thus countering the expansive interpretations from sociobiology, physical anthropology and evolutionary psychology (Wade 2004). I believe that in spite of – or rather because of – its sensitivity and complexity the question of embodiment and racialization must be dealt with by the social sciences. My theoretical proposition to approach it by asking how bodies become racialized and how races become embodied paves the way to what could be seen as the elementary structures of racial embodiment. On the one hand, the attention granted to social interactions from the perspective of the three grammatical persons underscores the dialectic of subjection and subjectivation which is at stake in the dynamic processes of ascription and recognition, but complicates it with the introduction of the third party involved in the act of objectification. On the other hand, the two-dimensional analysis in terms of condition and experience inscribes these processes within social forces and historical legacies and therefore provides not just a contextual background but, more crucially, the structural and temporal depth that a merely interactional reading necessarily underestimates.

To the questions "Has racialization always existed?" which has recently re-emerged, and "Is it not time to get rid of racialization?" that is sometimes optimistically asked, I have not responded: to the first because it is speculative about the past, and to the second because it is speculative about the future. I prefer to consider what can be said of the present from a reasonably scientific perspective. This choice does not ignore the past, as I have shown how profoundly it is related to the present, no more than it eludes the future, which I believe can only be invented on the foundations of a lucid view of the present.

## REFERENCES

Althusser, Louis, 1971 Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses. *In* Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays. pp. 127–188. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Andreasen, Robin, 2000 Race: Biological Reality or Social Construct? Philosophy of Science 67 (Proceedings): S653–S666.

Appiah, Antony, 1996 Race, Culture, Identity: Misunderstood Connections. *In* Color Conscious. The Political Morality of Race. Anthony Appiah and Amy Gutman, eds., pp. 76–80, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Arendt, Hannah, 1958 The Human Condition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Austin, John Langshaw, 1962 How to Do Things With Words. New York: Oxford University Press.

Banton, Michael, 1977 The Idea of Race. London: Tavistock.

Bauman, Zygmunt, 1992 Modernity and the Holocaust. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo, 1999 The Essential Social Fact of Race. American Sociological Review 64 (6): 899–906.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1977 Outline of a Theory of Practice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 2000 Pascalian Meditations. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Briggs, Charles, 2003 Stories in the Time of Cholera. Racial Profiling During a Medical Nightmare. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Brodkin, Karen, 2006 How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says About Race in America. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Bruner, Edward, 1986 Experience and Its Expressions. *In* The Anthropology of Experience. Victor Turner and Edward Bruner, eds. pp. 3–30. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Butler, Judith, 1997 The Psychic Life of Power. Theories in Subjection. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Collins, Patricia Hill, 1990 Black Feminist Thought. Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment. Boston: Unwin Hyman.

Cowlishaw, Gillian, 2000 Censoring Race in "Post-colonial" Anthropology. Critique of Anthropology 20 (2): 101–123.

Crenshaw, Kimberle, 1993 Mapping the Margins. Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color. Stanford Law Review 43(6): 1241–1299.

Csordas, Thomas, 1990 Embodiment as a Paradigm for Anthropology. *Ethos* 18: 5–47.

Csordas, Thomas, 1994 Embodiment and Experience. The Existential Ground of Culture and Self. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Das, Veena, 2007 Life and Words. Violence and the Descent Into the Ordinary. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Dewey, John, 1998 The Essential Dewey. Ethics, Logic, Psychology. Larry Hickman and Thomas Alexander, eds., Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Dressler, William, Kathryn Oths and Clarence Gravlee, 2005 Race and Ethnicity in Public Health Research. Models to Explain Health Disparities. Annual Review of Anthropology 34: 231–252.

Du Bois, W. E. B., 1994 The Souls of Black Folk. New York: Dover Publications.

Essed, Philomena, 1991 Understanding Everyday Racism. An Interdisciplinary Theory. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Essed, Philomena, 2005 Gendered Preferences in Racialized Spaces. Cloning the Physician. *In* Racialization. Studies in Theory and Practice. Karim Murji and John Solomos, eds., pp. 227–247. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fanon, Frantz, 1967 Black Skin, White Masks. New York: Grove Press.

Fanon, Frantz, 2004 The Wretched of the Earth. New York: Grove Press.

Farmer, Paul, 2004 An Anthropology of Structural Violence. Current Anthropology 45(3): 305–317.

Fassin, Didier, 2002 L'invention française de la discrimination. Revue française de science politique 52(4): 395–415.

Fassin, Didier, 2006 Du déni à la dénégation. Psychologie politique des représentations des discriminations. *In* De la question sociale à la question raciale? Didier Fassin and Eric Fassin eds., pp. 133–147. Paris: La Découverte.

Fassin, Didier, 2007 When Bodies Remember. The Experience and Politics of AIDS in South Africa. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Fassin, Didier, 2008 The Embodied Past. From Paranoid Style to Politics of Memory in South Africa. Social Anthropology 16(3): 312–328.

Fassin, Didier, 2010 Ni race, ni racisme. Ce que racialiser veut dire. *In* Les Nouvelles frontières de la société française. Didier Fassin, ed., pp. 147–172, Paris: La Découverte.

Fassin, Didier, 2011 Ethnopsychiatry and the Postcolonial Encounter. A French Psychopolitics of Otherness. *In* Unconscious Dominions. Warwick Anderson, Richard Keller and Deborah Jenson, eds. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Fassin, Eric, 2010 Statistiques raciales ou racistes? Histoire et actualité d'une controverse française. *In* Les nouvelles frontières de la société française. Didier Fassin, ed., pp. 427–451. Paris: La Découverte.

Foucault, Michel, 1982 The Subject and Power. *In* Michel Foucault. Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics. Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, pp. 208–227. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Frazer, Nancy, 1997 Justice Interruptus. Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist" Condition. New York: Routledge.

Geertz, Clifford, 1973 The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books.

Gilroy, Paul, 1987 There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack. The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation. London: Routledge.

Gilroy, Paul, 1993 The Black Atlantic. Modernity and Double Consciousness. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Griffin, John Howard, 1962 Black Like Me. New York: Signet.

Guillaumin, Colette, 1995 The Specific Characteristics of Racist Ideology. *In* Racism, Sexism, Power and Ideology. pp. 29–60. London: Routledge.

Hacking, Ian, 1991 A Tradition of Natural Kinds. Philosophical Studies 61: 109–126.

Hacking, Ian, 2005 Why Race Still Matters. Daedalus 134(1): 102–116.

Hage, Ghassan, 2005 White Self-Racialization as Identity Fetishism. Capitalism and the Experience of Colonial Whiteness. *In* Racialization. Studies in Theory and Practice. Karim Murji and John Solomos, eds. pp. 185–205. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hinton, Alexander Laban, ed., 2002 Annihilating Difference. The Anthropology of Genocide. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hirschfeld, L., 1997 The Conceptual Politics of Race: Lessons from Our Children. Ethos 25: 63–92.

Howarth Caroline, 2002 'So, you're from Brixton?' The Struggle for Recognition and Esteem in a Stigmatized Community. Ethnicities 2(2): 237–260.

Ignatiev, Noel, 1995 How the Irish Became White. London: Routledge.

Kelman, Gaston, 2003 Je suis noir et je n'aime pas le manioc. Paris: Max Milo.

Koselleck, Reinhart, 2004 Futures Past. On the Semantics of Historical Time. New York: Columbia University Press.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 1962 Phenomenology of Perception. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 1968 The Visible and the Invisible. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 2004 Basic Writings. Thomas Baldwin ed. London: Routledge.

Miles, Robert, 1989 Racism. London: Routledge.

Morrison, Toni, 1992 Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and Literary Imagination. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP.

Omi, Michael and Howard Winant, 1986 Racial Formation in the United States. From the Sixties to the Nineties. New York: Routledge.

Penner, Andrew, and Aliya Saperstein, 2008 How Social Status Shapes Race. Proceedings of the National Academy of Science 105(50): 1628–1630.

Posel, Deborah, 2001 What's in a Name? Racial Categorizations Under Apartheid and Their Afterlife. Transformation 47: 50–74.

Prewitt, Kenneth, 2005 Racial Classification in American. Where Do We Go From Here? Daedalus 134(1): 5–17.

Root, Michael, 2001 The Problem of Race in Medicine. Philosophy of the Social Sciences 31(1): 20–39.

Sartre, Jean-Paul, 1995 Anti-Semite and Jew. New York: Schocken Books.

Scott, Joan Wallach, 1996 Only Paradoxes to Offer. French Feminists and the Rights of Man. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Sen, Amartya, 2006 Identity and Violence. The Illusion of Destiny. New York: Norton & Company.

Turner, Victor, 1986 Dewey, Dilthey, and Drama. Essay in the Anthropology of Experience. *In* The Anthropology of Experience. Victor Turner and Edward Bruner, eds., pp. 33–44. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Wacquant, Loïc, 2005 Carnal Connections. On Embodiment, Apprenticeship, and Membership. Qualitative Sociology 28(4): 445–474.

Wade, Peter, 2004 Human Nature and Race. Anthropological Theory 4(2): 157–172.

Webster, Yehudi, 1992 Racialization in America. New York: St Martin's Press.

# CHAPTER 25 THE SENSES
## *Polysensoriality*

*David Howes*

### Introduction: The Shifting Sensorium

As Bryan Turner (1997: 16) has observed, one cannot take "the body" for granted as a "natural, fixed and historically universal datum of human societies." The classification of the body's senses is a case in point. "Sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch: that the senses should be enumerated in this way is not self-evident. The number and order of the senses are fixed by custom and tradition, not by nature" (Vinge 1975: 107). Plato, for example, apparently did not distinguish clearly between the senses and feelings. "In one enumeration of perceptions, he begins with sight, hearing and smell, leaves out taste, instead of touch mentions hot and cold, and adds sensations of pleasure, discomfort, desire and fear" (Classen 1993a: 2). It is largely thanks to the works of Aristotle that the notion of the senses being five in number, and of each sense as having its proper object (i.e. sight being concerned with color, hearing with sound, smell with odor, etc.) came to figure as a commonplace of Western culture. Even so, Aristotle classified taste as "a form of touch"; hence, it would be more accurate to speak of "the four senses" in his enumeration.

So, too, was there considerable diversity of opinion in antiquity regarding the order of the senses (i.e. sight as the most informative of the modalities, followed by hearing, smell, and so on down the scale). Diogenes, for example, apparently placed smell in first place followed by hearing, and other philosophers proposed other hierarchies; what would become the standard ranking was given its authority (once again) by Aristotle (Vinge 1975: 17–19). However, even he wavered on some counts; for example, while Aristotle portrayed sight as the most informative of the senses, he described touch as the primary sense and the basis of human intelligence. The preeminence of sight would become a commonplace of Western culture (more perhaps due to Plato's influence than Aristotle's), but the primacy of vision did not go unchallenged. For example, in the Middle Ages sight was trumped by hearing on account of the

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

latter sense being considered the medium of divine communication (Classen 1993a: 3).[1] Another variation on the conventional ranking blossomed in the 18th century when taste came out from under the thrall of touch and enjoyed more license as a result of its metaphorization into the sense of distinction, of judgment (Howes 2009: 39 n. 27). No longer confined to taste in food, it was extended to taste in art, music and friendship, among other domains.[2]

When we look outside the Western tradition, the impression of the shifting character of the divisions of the sensorium becomes even more pronounced. For example, the Javanese "have five senses (seeing, hearing, *talking*, smelling and feeling), which do not coincide exactly with our five" (Dundes cited in Howes 2009: 2). The Cashinahua of Peru apparently distinguish six senses or "forms of sentience" (intelligences). These are localized in the skin, the hands, the eyes, ears, liver and genitals. "Skin intelligence" (*bichi una*) is the knowledge of the environment one acquires through one's skin – through the feel of the sun, the wind, and the forest. It is what enables one to find one's way through the jungle and to locate prey, and also includes knowledge of the behavior patterns of other people as well as animals. "Hand intelligence" (*meken una*) enables a man to chop down a tree or shoot an animal with bow and arrow, while in the case of a woman the hands are the means by which knowledge of weaving, pottery-making and cooking skills enter the body. The eyes are the locus of the "eye spirit" which perceives the spiritual insides or substance of persons, animals and things as opposed to their surface. (Surfaces are the preserve of skin intelligence.) Social intelligence is "gained through and resides in the ears and therefore is called *pabinki una*, ear knowledge," reflecting the significance of oral–aural communication in Cashinahua social life (Kensinger 1995: 241). "Liver intelligence" refers to knowledge of emotions, since it is "in one's liver that one feels joy and sorrow, fear and hope, distrust and pleasure" (Kensinger 1995: 243). Finally, the Cashinahua conceive of the genitals, which are the seat of one's "life force," as the source of knowledge of one's mortality and (through the procreation of children) immortality. "Does [the] brain have knowledge?" the ethnographer Kenneth Kensinger asked, assuming that the Cashinahua must recognize some sort of cognitive processing centre or data bank. "'*Hamaki* (it doesn't),' they responded" (Kensinger 1995: 239), "the whole body knows."

The Javanese and Cashinahua cases bring out well how the bounds of sense and the senses (individually and as a totality) may differ across cultures. The mode of operation of the senses is also subject to variation historically and cross-culturally. For example, in the Western tradition the eyes were long believed to perceive by sending out rays which touched and mingled with the objects to which they were directed. A similar understanding would appear to underlie the notion of speech as a sense, such as found among the Javanese, and other peoples, as well as being a recurrent theme in the history of the Western sensorium (see Howes 2009: 4–5). The thought of speech as a sense might seem odd, but the reasons for this are telling. As Constance Classen points out, the reason for the oddity is:

> partly because we conceive of the senses as passive recipients of data, whereas speech is an active externalization of data. It is also because we think of the senses as natural faculties and speech as a learned acquirement. The ancients, however, [like the Javanese] … were apt to think of the senses more as media of communication than as passive recipients of data (Classen 1993a: 2).

The implication of this observation is that in some (perhaps many) cultures the senses act outwardly as well as inwardly: the act of perceiving goes on *in the environment as much as in the brain*.[3] Put another way, the senses are *interactive*, they mingle with their objects, and are not merely reactive to external stimuli. The widespread belief in the power of the "evil eye" to adversely affect its object is one manifestation of this phenomenon, speech is another (as it involves both listening and talking), and so too is the "fact" which the philosopher Merleau-Ponty (1962) is commonly credited with having discovered about the sense of touch – namely, that every act of touching involves being touched at the same time.

It will already be apparent from the foregoing that the compartmentalized, hierarchized, pacified and privatized conception of how the senses function, which informs the contemporary Western psychology of perception, constitutes a serious impediment to the advancement of research in the anthropology and history of the senses. It must be "bracketed" if any headway is to be made in the investigation of the life of the senses in cultural context. The moment this is done, the moment we start exploring the *meanings* associated with various sensory faculties and sensations in different cultures, then, as Classen (1997: 402) avers, we discover

> a cornucopia of potent sensory symbolism. Sight may be linked to reason or to witchcraft, taste may be used as a metaphor for aesthetic discrimination or for sexual experience, an odour may signify sanctity or sin, political power or social exclusion.

Classen continues, introducing the capital notion of the "sensory model":

> Together, these sensory meanings and values form the *sensory model* espoused by a society, according to which the members of that society "make sense" of the world, or translate sensory perceptions and concepts into a particular "worldview." There will likely be challenges to this model from within the society, persons and groups who differ on certain sensory values, yet this model will provide the basic perceptual paradigm to be followed or resisted (Classen 1997: 402).

## Physical Anthropology of the Senses

Classen's statement – with its emphasis on uncovering indigenous models and techniques of the senses – is expressive of the theoretical approach to the study of the sensorium which crystallized in the cultural anthropology of the 1990s. However, anthropological interest in the senses goes back further, to the physical anthropology of the 1890s, as exemplified by the psychophysical research agenda of the Cambridge expedition to the Torres Straits of 1898 (Haddon 1901). That expedition, which also marked the invention of the fieldwork tradition in anthropology, was led by the biologist A. C. Haddon. He purposely recruited the physician–psychologist W. H. R. Rivers (an expert in visual perception), and two of the latter's protegés, Charles Myers and William MacDougall (both young physicians who would go on to shape the direction of experimental psychology). They took with them a formidable battery of tests to measure the sensory acuity of the natives, including: Haken's E, Lovibund's tintometer, the Müller–Lyer and other visual illusions, Politzer's Hörmesser

(for measuring auditory sensitivity), Galton's whistle (for pitch discrimination), diverse musical instruments, Zwaardemaker's olfactometer, various taste solutions, a hand-grasp dynanometer, an algometer (for studying pain thresholds), marbles, and at least twenty other such apparatuses.

While the physical context of the expedition's research was tropical, the intellectual context was decidedly occidental, suffused by the emergent doctrine of psychophysics and the then-prevailing Spencerian hypothesis (Richards 1998). The latter hypothesis (or rather conceit) was grounded in a series of cultural assumptions concerning the relationship between the intellect or reason on the one hand and the body and senses on the other, and between the senses themselves in terms of higher vs. lower, and civilized vs. primitive (or animalistic). Various treatises dating from the 19th century already played up the supposedly superior sensory abilities and proclivities of "primitive" peoples, particularly in so far as the "lower," "primitive" senses were concerned (smell and touch). These representations became commonplace in the 19th century, supported by the anecdotal observations of travelers and missionaries. The natural historian Lorenz Oken proposed a racial hierarchy of the senses as part of his sweeping theory of the "perfection" of the senses in the evolution of animals and humans. In his scheme, the European "eye-man" was at the top of the scale, followed by the Asian "ear-man," the Native American "nose-man," the Australian "tongue-man," and, at the bottom, the African "skin-man" (Howes 2009: 10–11). All this fed into the Spencerian hypothesis, which held that " 'primitives' surpassed 'civilised' people in psychophysical performance because more energy remained devoted to this level in the former instead of being diverted to 'higher functions' " as among the latter (Richards 1998: 137).

It is interesting to note that Rivers and company introduced their experiments to the Torres Strait Islanders as follows:

> The natives were told that some people had said that the black man could see and hear, etc., better than the white man and that we had come to find out how clever they were, and that their performances would all be described in a big book so that everyone would read about them. This appealed to the vanity of the people and put them on their mettle. (Rivers 1901: 3).

It will be appreciated that, given the supposed connection between sensory superiority and mental inferiority, to win at this contest was also to lose.

Rivers and Myers carried out very thorough eye and ear exams of the natives, noting the prevalence of color-blindness, deafness, etc. (so that the issues of pathology and acuity could be kept separate). They also gathered extensive data on sensory vocabularies (not just color terms, but taste and smell and hearing terms too), prompted by the supposition that there might be some association between extensiveness of nomenclature (e.g. the presence / absence of a word for blue) and degree of sensitiveness. They carried out their studies of psychophysical performance with remarkable resolve considering the deficiencies or outright failure of much of their test equipment, illness (which impaired their own sensory abilities), and native resistance (e.g. to having tubes stuck up their noses – understandably). For example, the hearing threshold tests were compromised by the pounding of the surf and rustle of the breeze in the palm trees – not very typical of laboratory conditions. Getting a result was difficult (Richards 1998). They also had to control for the problem of subjects responding to the tests

based on inferences (which obviously involved some degree of intellection) as opposed to reporting "immediate sense impressions" (which is what they were after). Their difficulties in this connection ought to have prompted more reflection on the impossibilities of ever completely stripping the perceptual process of its cultural and personal lining, but they did not.

What did the team find? The results were mixed, as were their interpretations and McDougall appears to have differed from Rivers and Myers in the conclusions he drew. Thus, McDougall studied the Islanders' tactile sensitivity using a compass to measure the threshold for the discrimination of two points on the skin and found this to be comparatively low: "about one half that of Englishmen" (McDougall 1901: 192). He used an algometer, which presses a point against the skin with varying levels of pressure to determine their sensibility to pain and found this to be comparatively high: "nearly double that of Englishmen" (McDougall 1901: 195). He concluded that the natives' "delicacy of tactile discrimination constitutes a racial characteristic" and that the "oft-repeated statement that savages in general are less susceptible to pain than white men" was exact (McDougall 1901: 193–4). McDougall did not perceive any contradiction to the quite opposite results of these two tests, nor did he demonstrate the same methodological acumen (or experimental reflexivity) as his fellow team members (Richards 1998).

While McDougall found confirmation for the prevailing stereotypes of "primitive" man, Rivers and Myers found no definite racial differences in the acuity of the senses they studied (see Rivers 1905). For example, Myers (1901) found the average olfactory acuity to be slightly higher in Torres Straits than in Aberdeenshire and general auditory acuity to be inferior, but emphasized the limits of the test equipment he utilized (and incomparability of the data) more than anything, while Rivers concluded that "the general average" in Torres Straits "do not exhibit that degree of superiority over the European in visual acuity proper which the accounts of travelers might have led one to expect" (Rivers 1901: 42). Rivers otherwise found that some visual illusions were experienced more strongly by native subjects than by British subjects, and others less strongly, but there was no "marked degree" of difference here either. This strike in favor of the psychophysical unity of humankind and incipient critique of the racist reasoning of the day was, however, tempered by Rivers and Myers resorting in the next sentences of their respective reports to relating anecdotes of native sensory virtuosity or extraordinary "powers of observation." They simply could not get the Spencerian hypothesis out of their heads. The one difference from MacDougall is that they related these manifestations of extrasensitivity to "habits of life" – that is, to training and survival or custom rather than inheritance – but, then, because customs could be graded in terms of degree of civilization, this alternative explanation did nothing to unseat the Spencerian hypothesis. Thus, Rivers and Myers were both very modern in their use of statistics and the (experimental) evidence of the senses to challenge racist doctrines, and very Victorian in the way they persisted in employing evolutionary-style reasoning to interpret the scarcest indication of difference in the statistical tables their research generated.[4]

## From Measurement to Meaning

After World War I, as the racialist (if not outright racist) assumptions which had informed the physical anthropology of the previous century came to be discredited

and the attention of field anthropologists shifted from physiology to social morphology (the analysis of social organization), working on and with the senses ground to a halt. It was rekindled, however, in the 1950s by Margaret Mead and Rhoda Métraux – two very sensuously minded scholars – this time with an emphasis on the meaning of the senses rather than their measurement. Mead and Métraux proposed that

> Just as linguistics requires a special ear [so cultural analysis requires a special honing of all the senses, since people] not only hear and speak and communicate through words, but also use all their senses in ways that are equally systematic… to taste and smell and to pattern their capacities to taste and smell, so that that the traditional cuisine of a people can be as distinctive and as organized as a language (Mead and Métraux 1953: 16).

This formulation inspired some first-rate work on the part of their students (e.g. Williams 1966 on the cultural patterning of tactile experience among the Dusun of Borneo), but it also contained the seeds of its own dissolution by virtue of the analogy to language. It would not be long before this analogy – whether it be to linguistics (Claude Lévi-Strauss), text (Clifford Geertz), discourse (Michel Foucault) or dialogue (Dennis Tedlock) – proliferated and completely dominated the anthropological imagination. Everything came to be structured (or approached) "like a language" (or text).

It bears underlining that not every anthropologist subscribed. Some managed to keep their senses about them, such as Edmund Carpenter. In company with Marshall McLuhan, he developed a theory of how the extension of any one sense by technology (e.g. radio as an extension of the ear, etc.) alters the way in which the other senses interact and thereby impacts the way in which people think and act (Carpenter 1973: 21–8). But for the most part cultures came to be regarded as texts to be read and the anthropological function was reduced to one of writing (as opposed to sensing). This development reached its climax in the mid 1980s with the publication of *Writing Culture* (Clifford and Marcus 1986), wherein one scribe wrote: "Perception has nothing to do with [ethnography]"(Tyler 1986: 137; see further Howes 2003: 22–26).

Another anthropologist who, like Carpenter, resisted the linguistic-textual turn was Michael Jackson. The latter took exception not only to the interpretive anthropology of Clifford Geertz (cultures as texts) but the corporeal anthropology of Mary Douglas (the body as model for and imprint of "society"). Jackson criticized Douglas for the way she viewed the body as "simply the passive ground on which forms of social organization are inscribed" – that is, as an "it" (quoted in Howes 2003: 28). He critiqued Geertz for "[positing] truth at the level of disembodied concepts and decontextualized sayings" (Jackson 1983: 341). Not all rituals are designed to "say something of something" (as Geertz would have it): rather, according to Jackson, their meaning resides in their doing, and somatization (knowledge of the body) may be emphasized to the exclusion of verbalization. Jackson gives the example of how the senses of the neophyte are trained in the context of Kuranko male initiation rituals:

> the value of moderation is inculcated through taboos on calling for food or referring to food whilst in the initiation lodge… Similarly, the importance placed on listening to elders during the period of sequestration is correlated with the virtue of respecting elders whose counsels guarantee social as well as physical life… Other senses are developed too, so that keenness of smell is correlated with the quality of discrimination (newly-initiated boys often quite literally "turn up their noses" at the sight of uninitiated kids, remarking

> on their crude smell), and control of the eyes is connected with sexual proprieties, most notably mindfulness of those domains and secret objects associated with the other sex which one may not see except on pain of death (Jackson 1983: 337).

To elaborate, the purpose of Kuranko initiation rites is to teach the neophyte how to regulate perceptions in each of his senses. Through learning to use his senses in the approved manner, he develops a set of habitudes or dispositions which are consistent with the Kuranko moral order. It is through the cultivation of bodily awareness – the education of the senses – that moral awareness is evolved. However, the moral concepts are not propositions which come before the ways of sensing, they *are* the ways of sensing. In other words, Kuranko rituals are not texts to be read but rather ways of sensing the world, in which body and meaning, media and message, are intimately intertwined.

As mentioned previously, the cultural anthropology of the senses crystallized as a sub-field in the 1990s. It could be said to occupy a position at the conjuncture of media anthropology (Edmund Carpenter) and phenomenological anthropology (Michael Jackson) as well as medical anthropology (Robert Desjarlais, Carol Laderman) and ethnomusicology (Steve Feld, Marina Roseman), since it in large part grew out of the confluence of research in these four areas. It could otherwise be seen as a sub-field of the anthropology of the body,[5] although its take on "the body" is somewhat different. Whereas the anthropology of the body has traditionally been dedicated to overcoming the mind/body split by positing a "mindful body," sensory anthropology has tended to accentuate the differential elaboration of the senses and thus advocates a more divisive but always relational and in any event less unified understanding of embodiment. Within this approach, cultures are conceptualized as cultivating different ways of sensing, or "techniques of the senses," and the aim of ethnography is to describe the socio-logic which informs how the members of a given culture distinguish, value, relate and combine the senses in everyday life. Particular attention is paid to analyzing how the senses are gendered (Classen 1998), policed (Laplantine 2002), commodified (Howes 2004), subject to experimentation by means of drugs (Jackson 2004), emplaced (Fletcher 2004), and, most fundamentally, "experienced" (Howes 2009: 29–32). All this is summed up in the title of this chapter: polysensoriality – a term which highlights the multiple ways in which the senses are constructed and lived in cultural context.

Classic works of the 1990s include Constance Classen's fine-grained and rigorously comparative anthropology of the senses in *Worlds of Sense* (Classen 1993a). The eponymous chapter of that book presents a comparison of the thermal, olfactory and colorfully synaesthetic "sensory cosmologies" and daily and ritual practices of the Tzotzil, Ongee and Desana respectively, showing that not all so-called oral societies are "dominated by the ear" (*pace* McLuhan and Carpenter). The first chapter, "The Odor of the Rose," documents the shifting cultural fortunes of the senses of smell and sight in the transition from premodernity to modernity in the Western tradition. The final chapter, "Literacy as Anti-Culture," examines the traumatic clash of Incan and European sensory orders in the context of the Spanish Conquest (see further Classen 1993b).

Another classic work is Michael Taussig's *Mimesis and Alterity*.[6] In a series of "somersaults" – between the Cuna shaman carving wooden figurines of "European types" for use in a healing ritual and the invention of "mimetically capacious machines" like

the camera in the second half of the 19th century, and between Darwin marveling at the "mimetic powers" of the natives of Tierra del Fuego and the complete destabilization of identity (Western and non-Western alike) at the present conjuncture through the "wonder of mimesis" – Taussig takes "the Academy" way outside its comfort zone – blowing up cherished truths like "the arbitrariness of the signifier" or the "socially constructed" character of everything – and confronts it (us) with the notion of the copy, through its "sensuous fidelity" to the original, affecting the latter to such a degree "*that the representation shares in or acquires the properties of the represented*" (Taussig 1992: 47–48). Taussig's profoundly sensuous, apparently essentialist (but actually just materialist), postcolonialist assault on the ideology of representation would have many reverberations.

Perhaps the most sensational work of the 1990s is Paul Stoller's *Sensuous Scholarship* (Stoller 1997). In it and other monographs he recounts aspects of his apprenticeship as a sorcerer among the Songhay of Niger. Initiation as a sorcerer involves eating a bitter paste called *kusu* (food of power), and being "eaten" (consumed) by power in turn. (Gustatory metaphors abound in Songhay discourse.) Stoller relates how, subsequent to his initiation, he bore the brunt of diverse sorcery attacks. The symptoms of such attacks ranged from searing pains in the legs and gut to temporary paralysis. These bodily consequences, which had no rational explanation according to Stoller, convinced him to stop trying to "discover principles, patterns and hypotheses" which might "explain" (i.e. rationalize) witchcraft and sorcery beliefs among the Songhay (as Evans-Pritchard had attempted to do for the Azande) and start accepting the "tangled skein" of social relations and occult knowledges at face value (Stoller 1997: 22). It also persuaded him to stop thinking metaphorically and start thinking somatically about the gustatory idiom of Songhay sorcery, as well as to conceptualize the embodiment of the ethnographer in a new way:

> For ethnographers embodiment is more than the realization that our bodily experience gives metaphorical meaning to our experience; it is rather the realization that, like Songhay sorcerers, we too are consumed by the sensual world, that ethnographic things capture us through our bodies, that profound lessons are learned when sharp pains streak up our legs in the middle of the night. (Stoller 1997: 23)

## Sensory Ethnography: State of the Art

Having starred some of the seminal works in sensory anthropology published during the final decade of the last century, in what follows I would like to highlight some of the key points of a series of works belonging to the first decade of the present millenium.

*Culture and the Senses: Bodily Ways of Knowing in an African Community* is an exemplary ethnography in which Kathryn Linn Geurts describes the sensory order of the Ewe-speaking Anlo of southeastern Ghana. The Anlo-Ewe are a migrant people whose sense of their own identity is intimately bound up with the ability to adapt to difficult circumstances. As one of their proverbs puts it: "If you visit the village of the toads and find them squatting you must squat too" (Geurts 2002: 96). This flexible disposition is instilled from birth: the newborn's limbs are massaged continuously in

order to inculcate suppleness of body and mind. It even precedes birth, since the fetus in the womb is envisaged as seated on a "stool" (i.e. the placenta) already practising the Anlo-Ewe arts of posture and balance.

Significantly, the eponym "Anlo" refers to a posture as well as the people. Specifically, the term refers to the "rolled up" posture (or "fetal position") which was adopted by Togbui Whenya (the ancestor who led the Anlo-Ewe out of slavery some 300 years ago) when he collapsed from exhaustion upon reaching the spot which they now make their homeland. The somatics of the term Anlo (pronounced AHNG-low) amplify its semantics. As Geurts (2002: 117) notes, saying "Anlo" produces a sensation that is best understood in terms of synaesthesia and iconicity: the curling of the tongue duplicates the rolling up of the body of the ancestor in the migration myth, and the final vowel has a rounded feeling to it as well. Geurts further relates how this feeling came over her whole body when listening to the Anlo-Ewe migration myth being told and, at the climactic moment of the ancestor's collapse, finding herself curling her own body inward in concert with the other members of the audience. Where an earlier anthropology would have concentrated on analyzing how identity is symbolized, the focus of Geurts's research is on how identity is *sensed*;[7] and her focus is so fine that she even finds meaning in how *words* feel.[8]

Geurts asked one of her female informants what it felt like to be a part of a people whose name means "rolled up." "She said that rolling up in a fetal position is something you do when you feel sad, when you are crying, when you feel lonely or depressed. She said that being Anlo meant that you felt that way a lot, but you always had to unroll, or come out of it, and that gave you a feeling of strength" (Geurts 2002: 118).

The two poles of Anlo-Ewe compartment – rolling up / springing back – aptly condense the twin themes of "persecution and power" which they regard as the defining feature of their history as a people. The feeling of persecution stems from the oppressive way in which they were treated during the period of their servitude, and still haunts them due to the tense relations they maintain with their current neighbours. The sense of power comes from managing to survive in the face of such adversity and making the most of their lot. For example, the current Anlo-Ewe homeland is notoriously poor in natural resources (compared to that of the Asante, for example, who make-up the dominant ethnic group in Ghana) but they have compensated for this lack by emphasizing education. Educational achievement has in turn landed them a disproportionate number of jobs in the public sector, as well as a certain reputation. The Anlo-Ewe are respected for their industriousness, but resented for their success, which in turn makes them want to retreat into themselves, or "roll up."

Geurts (2002: 47–49) notes that the Anlo-Ewe word for "to hear" (*nusese*) is used to denote "sensing" (or "experiencing") generally, as well as "understanding." This might be taken to suggest that their culture has an aural bias. But she was equally struck by the extent to which the interoceptive senses (proprioception, balance and kinaesthesia) were elaborated. Being able to stand upright and move on two legs is considered the hallmark of humanity by the Anlo-Ewe, and their language contains over fifty terms for different "kinaesthetic styles." Each of these ways of walking is held to be expressive of a person's moral character: for example, an individual may stride like a lion (*kadzakadza*) or zigzag as if drunk (*lugulugu*) (Geurts 2002: 72–84). Plainly, the Anlo-Ewe are keenly attuned to the body in motion. This sensitivity to bodily movement is further refracted in the way Anlo-Ewe people "believed loss of

hearing was the most grave impairment of sensory perception because with this loss would come a disruption to their sense of balance" and without balance they could not move (Geurts 2002: 50). Thus, hearing and balance are the twin pillars of the Anlo-Ewe sensory model.

In *Appetites*, Judith Farquhar begins her account of gustatory and amorous relations in post-socialist China with the famous line from the fourth-century BCE philosopher Mencius: "appetite for food and sex is natural." She juxtaposes this quote with that equally famous line from the young Karl Marx: "The forming of the five senses is a labour of the entire history of the world down to the present" (Farquhar 2002: 1, 7). Bringing these two lines together raises the question: Are the appetites only natural, or do they have a history? This question is at the core of Farquhar's ethnography, which is a study of the rise of non-collective appetites and the pleasures of the table and the bedroom in reform era China, where Maoist asceticism is decidedly in decline and capitalist sensualism (with a Chinese twist) is on the rise.

Farquhar (2002: 32) holds that the task of ethnography is to "expose a body totally imprinted by history" à la Foucault. The upshot of her ethnography accordingly takes the form of the following response to Mencius: "one can declare eating and sex to be natural, but little can be taken for granted about what eating and sex are in any particular time and place" (Farquhar 2002: 290). Farquhar fleshes out her theoretical position further in the following lines:

> If bodies are capable of imagining, we should be able to carnally imagine other life worlds, or sensory realms, through an ethnographic description that attends to the concrete and the everyday… Direct sensory experience, the material attributes of concrete things and mundane activities, can be invoked, and thereby imagined, but only by way of language and images and only in the context of times, places, and habitus that impose constraints on what can be experienced or imagined (Farquhar 2002: 57).

This notion of sensation as always already constrained and mediated by representation (language and images) is in keeping with the emphasis in other works in sensory anthropology (e.g. Laplantine 2002) on the dynamic, relational (intersensory, multimedia) and often conflicted nature of our everyday experience of the sensory world. It leads Farquhar in particular to interweave readings of various expressions of state propaganda and contemporary Chinese popular culture (films, novels, self-help books, surveys) with her own experiences of eating and talking about sex with her informants. By dispersing her authority as an ethnographer in this way (i.e. treating filmmakers and novelists as "partners" in the ethnographic enterprise), Farquhar is able to bring multiple perspectives to bear on a range of issues which thoroughly vexed her hosts, such as: "Which is preferable, scarce and bad food shared by all or civilized luxuries available only to a few?" or: "Should individual experiences and private memories of sexual encounters be of public concern?" (Farquhar 2002: 30). The pleasures of the bedroom as of the table are far from innocent for contemporary Chinese, most of whom have experienced state-controlled sexuality and the pangs of famine in the past, and still recall the Maoist slogan: "Is eating and drinking a mere trifle? No. Class struggle exists even at the tips of your chopsticks" (Farquhar 2002: 80). The pleasurable thus remains ineluctably political for modern Chinese subjects.

Farquhar devotes one chapter of *Appetites* to a discussion of the theory of flavour causation in Chinese medicine. In China, medicines traditionally take the form of herbal concoctions and their power is held to reside in their flavour. The "five flavours" are pungent, sweet, sour, bitter, and salty, each of which is understood to have a different function. Sour, for example, has the function of "contracting and constricting," pungent that of "spreading and disseminating," sweet has the function of "replenishing and supplementing," and so forth (Farquhar 2002: 64–65). But how can the (subjective) experience of a flavour produce (objective) bodily changes of this nature? The Western mind balks at this suggestion for, as Farquhar points out:

> English does not offer a language for whole-body responses to tastes or a theory of flavor causation of this kind. Perhaps the closest we come is the notion of "heavy" or "light" meals affecting our alertness, or learning that certain foods "disagree" with our stomachs. The idea that flavor could have powerful physiological efficacies is odd enough to have been politely ignored by most of the English-language literature on Chinese herbal medicine. In North American nutritional lore, we tend to relegate tastes to that domain in which the (relatively isolated) human subject receives sensory input, registering pleasure or revulsion in response to food. We think of those forces and entities that actually alter our bodies as properties of the food that are quantifiable (e.g. fat, vitamin, or protein content) and inhere in the food whether we eat it or not. (Farquhar 2002: 66)

Flavours may be "secondary qualities" or subjective pleasures in Western psychology, but they are primary qualities and objective forces in Chinese ontology and medicine: "sweet herbals build up … overworked spleens and pungent drugs mobilize energies that steady … fluttering hearts," etc. (Farquhar 2002: 75). In this way the body becomes a "flavourful temporal formation," very different from the body image in (Western) biomedicine. Above all, the body is interpellated as the *subject* of experience. Farquhar avers that coming to appreciate how the apparently ephemeral (e.g. flavour) is actually essential proved crucial to her subsequent understanding of the "experiential" dimensions of Chinese medicine: "This experiential side to Chinese medicine encourages a personal micropolitics, as patients [in concert with their physicians] seek to govern themselves and their immediate environment using techniques that fuse thinking and feeling, forming habits that make sense to their own senses" (Farquhar 2002: 66).

Consider the following statement issued by the Beijing meeting of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) practitioners in 2001:

> There is sufficient evidence of Western medicine's effectiveness to expand its use into TCM and to encourage further studies of its physiology and clinical value. Western medicine shows promise as adjunctive treatment to TCM. As a stand-alone medicine, however, its efficacy is mainly in the areas of acute and catastrophic care that comprise a relatively minor percentage of total patient complaints (cited in Barcan, in press).

A Western physician could well be astounded to see biomedicine represented in this way, though his or her situation is actually no different than that of the TCM practitioner who has to face much the same representations being made of TCM by, say, the American Medical Association.

However, it is no longer solely *between* East and West that such debates take place, for there has been an explosion *within Western society itself* of so-called Complementary

and Alternative Medicines (CAM), some of which are inspired by Eastern philosophies, but many of which are homespun. As Ruth Barcan (in press) brings out well in "The Body Therapeutic: Alternative Therapies as Sensory Encounters," alternative diagnostic procedures from iridology to medical clairvoyance challenge biomedicine's claim to provide the best modes of seeing and knowing the body currently available. And alternative treatments from aromatherapy and music therapy to Reiki and Zero Balancing – to mention but a few – address parts (or dimensions) of the patient's being which do not register on the "scale of the gaze" or figure whatsoever in the (sensorially sterile) treatment regimens of biomedicine. The role of the senses in alternative therapies presents a fine example of contestation of the (dominant) sensory model "from within" (Classen 1997 – see above), as practitioners and their patients invest the senses with values and uses that are contrary to those of the dominant society. Barcan expresses the rationale for her adoption of a sensory studies approach to the cultural analysis of alternative medicine as follows:

> The major tenets underpinning contemporary cultural approaches to the senses are the historical separation and hierarchisation of the senses; the phenomenological interdependence of the senses; the variation and cultural specificity of sensory understanding, valuation and experience; and the connection between the senses and social values, including the gender, class and racial meanings associated with different sensory orders. These precepts are appropriate to an analysis that hopes to highlight why alternative therapies are both attractive and plausible to so many Westerners, what implications this has for bodily understanding and experience, and how particular sensory practices are implicated in the market. The senses are also a useful lens through which to consider how in alternative medicine bodily experiences are linked not only to pleasure, but also to information. For not only do alternative therapies offer up particular forms of experience that aren't available in biomedicine (such as lying down being caressed by waves of sound made by crystal bowls; or the sensuous touch and smells of aromatherapy massage), these are also linked to the offering of information or new ways of knowing the body. In alternative therapies, then, the senses act as diagnostic tools, as therapeutic modes, and as different modes of knowing the body (Barcan in press).

With the many insights it contains into other ways of thinking, living (and healing) through the senses, Barcan's "The Body Therapeutic" opens up a fascinating new chapter in the literature on the anthropology of medicines and embodiments.[9]

## Conclusion: Sensing Cultures

This chapter opened with an exploration of the diverse ways in which the senses are enumerated and ordered in different societies and periods. It went on to document the shift from measurement to meaning, and experiment to experience in the anthropology of the senses of the late 19th century compared to that of the late 20th–early 21st century. It concluded with a survey of some groundbreaking anthropological contributions to the emergent field of sensory studies.[10]

One final point needs to be made regarding what could be called the double role of the senses in anthropology. It concerns the senses as object of study *and* means of inquiry, for as Classen (1997: 409) observed in her landmark "Foundations" essay:

"The broad range of applications for a sensory analysis of culture indicates that the anthropology of the senses need not only be a 'sub-field' within anthropology, but may provide a fruitful perspective from which to examine many different anthropological concerns." This point was picked up on and developed by Michael Herzfeld, whose discussion in turn inspired the editors of *Ethnographic Fieldwork: An Anthropological Reader* to include a section on "Sensorial Fieldwork" in their anthology.[11] As they put it: "Herzfeld encourages sensorial fieldworkers to make the study of the entire sensorium indispensable to other domains of ethnographic inquiry, such as economics or politics … Just as attention to gender and reflexivity is now part and parcel of most ethnographic work, so the entire range of senses should become of similar concern" (Robben and Sluka 2007: 388).

In this way, good ethnography has come increasingly to spell not just "writing culture" (Clifford and Marcus 1986) but sensing cultures.

## NOTES

1 Hearing displaces sight as first among the senses in the work of Aquinas (Vinge 1975: 59). The last echo of this inversion is to be found in the work of the Christian mystic Swedenborg (Schmidt 2009). Boman (1960) provides some insight into the roots of this struggle for supremacy between seeing and hearing in the Christian tradition by tracing the ocularcentrism and verbocentrism of the West back to their respective sources in Classical Hellenic and Hebrew thought and culture.

2 This florescence of taste probably contributed to the growing sense of individualism – *chacun à son goût*. Formerly social status was determined by birth and enforced by means of sumptuary laws. Henceforth, personal identity would be shaped by other factors – most notably consumption patterns; that is, "taste cultures" (Howes and Lalonde 1991). The subjectivization of the individual through taste may be seen as complementing the objectification of the individual through the gaze during the period of the Enlightenment.

3 Put another way, perception is not confined to the neural pathways between receptor organ and brain but also unfolds in the pathways or channels between receptor organ and object. The latter construction is consistent with the Aristotelian notion that every act of perception involves the conjunction of an organ, an object and a medium, though Aristotle did not himself subscribe to the extramission theory of vision and perception. (Howes 2009: 16–20). The idea of medium is lacking from the doctrine of psychophysics (replaced by "energy" or "stimulus"), as appears from the following quotation:

> The events that culminate in perception begin with specialized receptor cells that convert a particular form of physical energy into bioelectric currents. Different sensors are sensitive to different types of energy, so the properties of the receptor cells determine the modality of a sensory system. Ionic currents are the currency of neural information processing, and current flows that begin in the receptors are transmitted through complex networks of interconnected neurons and, in the end result in a pattern of brain activity we call perception. (Hughes 2001: 7)

4 For the consummate expression of this pseudo-evolutionary psychology see e.g. Rivers 1905. For a cultural history of parallel developments in the French physical anthropology of the late 19th century see Dias (2004). For a highly sophisticated and culturally informed reprise of the comparative study of sensory vocabularies and discriminations which Rivers and company pioneered see the forthcoming special issue of *The Senses and Society* on "The Senses in Language and Culture" (Majid and Levinson in press).

5 The anthropology of the senses cannot, however, be seen as a sub-field of psychological anthropology due to its insistence on attending to the *social* life of the senses (not just their mental life), its critique of the privileging of cognition over perception, and its rejection of unimodal approaches to the study of sensory processes (see Howes 2003: 8–10).

6 Taussig's subtitle, "a particular history of the senses," could well be a veiled critique of *A Natural History of the Senses* (Ackerman 1990). No book has done more to forestall a properly *cultural* account of the senses than Ackerman's best-seller, with its personal reminiscences, fawning interviews, scientific tidbits and obliviousness to the politics of perception.

7 In a similar vein, when Geurts discusses handedness she describes in detail how, for example, it *feels* to hold a calabash the Anlo-Ewe way (see Geurts and Adikah 2006), whereas an earlier anthropology ignored touch and concentrated exclusively on the symbolism of right- and left-handedness (see Needham 1973; compare Classen 2005). This elision of the sensuous was also characteristic of the anthropology of food prior to the sensorial revolution of the 1990s when the question of taste was finally put on the table (see Korsmeyer 2005).

8 This attention to the sensory properties of language is new. To the idea of words as categorizing sensations has been added the recognition that words not only express but *embody* sensation in culturally peculiar ways. "Of course, onomatopoeia," one might think. But the matter is more complex (and multisensory) than that (see Majid and Levinson in press).

9 As a cultural studies scholar who also practices Reiki (non-professionally) and is an avid consumer of CAM, Barcan is ideally positioned to (as she expresses her goal) "bring some much needed critical interrogation to alternative medicine, but also … open possible avenues where Cultural Studies' conception of embodiment might be enriched through openness to some aspects of alternative thought and practice" (Barcan in press).

10 Sensory Studies is defined as "aris[ing] at the conjuncture and within the fields of anthropology, sociology, design, history, geography, performance, philosophy, literature, art history," etc. (see www.sensorystudies.org). Conspicuously absent from this list are the disciplines of psychology and neuroscience. This is part protest against their hegemonic status in the domain of perception and part insistence on the importance of attending to the social life of the senses.

11 As a case in point, in a contribution to a recent book on neo-nationalism in Europe; Ulf Hannerz (2006: 278) remarked: "Political anthropology … becomes an anthropology of the senses, an anthropology of emotion, an anthropology of the body."

## REFERENCES

Ackerman, Diane, 1990 A Natural History of the Senses. New York: Random House.

Barcan, Ruth, in press The Body Therapeutic: Alternative Therapies as Sensory Encounters. Oxford: Berg.

Boman, Thorlief, 1960 Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek. New York: Norton.

Carpenter, Edmund, 1973 Oh, What a Blow that Phantom Gave Me! New York: Bantam.

Classen, Constance, 1993a Worlds of Sense: Exploring the Senses in History and Across Cultures. London and New York: Routledge.

Classen, Constance, 1993b Inca Cosmology and the Human Body. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press.

Classen, Constance, 1997 Foundations for an Anthropology of the Senses. International Social Science Journal 153: 401–412.

Classen, Constance, 1998 The Color of Angels: Cosmology, Gender and the Aesthetic Imagination. London and New York: Routledge.

Classen, Constance, ed., 2005 The Book of Touch. Oxford: Berg.

Clifford, James and George Marcus, eds., 1986 Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Dias, Nélia, 2003 La mesure des sens. Les anthropologues et le corps humain au XIXe siècle. Paris: Aubier.

Farquhar, Judith, 2002 Appetites: Food and Sex in Post-Socialist China. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Fletcher, Christopher, 2004 Dystoposthesia. *In* Empire of the Senses. D. Howes, ed. pp. 380–398. Oxford: Berg.

Geurts, Kathryn Linn, 2002 Culture and the Senses: Bodily Ways of Knowing in an African Community. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Geurts, Kathryn Linn and Adikah, Elvis Gershon, 2006 Enduring and Endearing Feelings and the Transformation of Material Culture in West Africa. *In* Sensible Objects: Colonialism, Museums and Material Culture. Elizabeth Edwards et al., eds. Oxford: Berg.

Haddon, A. C., ed., 1901 Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hannerz, Ulf, 2006 Afterthoughts. *In* Neo-nationalism in Europe and Beyond: Perspectives from Social Anthropology. Andre Gingrich and Marcus Banks, eds. New York: Berghahn Books.

Howes, David, 2003 Sensual Relations: Engaging the Senses in Culture and Social Theory. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Howes, David, 2004 Hyperaesthesia, or The Sensual Logic of Late Capitalism. *In* Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader. David Howes, ed. Oxford: Berg.

Howes, David, ed., 2009 The Sixth Sense Reader. Oxford: Berg

Howes, David and Lalonde, Mark, 1991 The History of Sensibilities: Of the Standard of Taste in Mid-Eighteenth Century England and the Circulation of Smells in Post-Revolutionary France. Dialectical Anthropology 16: 125–35.

Hughes, H. C., 2001 Sensory Exotica: A World beyond Human Experience. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Jackson, Michael, 1983 Knowledge of the Body. Man (n.s.) 18: 327–345.

Jackson, Phil, 2004 Inside Clubbing: Sensual Experiments in the Art of Being Human. Oxford: Berg.

Kensinger, Kenneth, 1995 How Real People Ought to Live: The Cashinahua of Eastern Peru. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Korsmeyer, Carolyn, 2005 The Taste Culture Reader: Experiencing Food and Drink. Oxford: Berg.

Laplantine, François, 2002 Le social et le sensible. Introduction à une anthroplogie modale. Paris: Téraèdre.

Majid, Asifa and Levinson, Stephen, in press The Senses in Language and Perception. Theme Issue, The Senses and Society 6(1).

McDougall, William, 1901 Cutaneous Sensations. *In* Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Strait, vol. II. A. C. Haddon, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mead, Margaret and Métraux, Rhoda, eds., 1953 The Study of Culture at a Distance. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 1960 Phenomenology of Perception. London: Routledge.

Myers, C. S., 1901 Smell. *In* Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Strait, vol. II. A. C. Haddon, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Needham, Rodney, ed., 1973 Right and Left: Essays on Dual Symbolic Classification. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Richards, Graham, 1998 Getting a Result: The Expedition's Psychological Research 1898–1913. *In* Cambridge and the Torres Strait: Centenary Essays on the 1898 Anthropological Expedition. Anita Herle and Sandra Rouse, eds. pp. 158–180. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rivers, W. H. R., 1901 Introduction and Vision. *In* Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Strait, vol. II. A. C. Haddon, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rivers, W. H. R., 1905 Observations on the Sense of the Todas. British Journal of Psychology 1: 321–395.

Robben, Antonius, and Sluka, Jeffrey, eds., 2007 Ethnographic Fieldwork: An Anthropological Reader. Oxford: Blackwell.

Schmidt, Leigh, 2009 Swedenborg's Celestial Sensorium. *In* The Sixth Sense Reader. David Howes, ed. Oxford: Berg.

Stoller, Paul, 1997 Sensuous Scholarship. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Taussig, Michael, 1992 Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses. London: Routledge.

Turner, Bryan, 1997 The Body in Western Society: Social Theory and Its Perspectives. *In* Religion and the Body. Sarah Coakley, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 15–41.

Tyler, Stephen, 1986 Post-modern Ethnography. In Writing Culture. J. Clifford and G. Marcus, eds. pp. 122–140. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Vinge, Louise, 1975 The Five Senses: Studies in a Literary Tradition. Lund: The Royal Society of the Humanities at Lund.

Williams, T. R., 1966 Cultural Structuring of Tactile Experience in a Borneo Society. American Anthropologist 68: 27–39.

CHAPTER 26

# SENSORIAL MEMORY
## *Embodied Legacies of Genocide*

*Carol A. Kidron*

Foundational paradigms in psychology and Holocaust and genocide studies have constituted a "universal semiotics of suffering" (Fassin 2009) whereby genocide survivors and their descendants world-wide are said to experience the pathologizing and emotively debilitating scars of the genocide past (Danieli 1998; Rousseau and Drapeau 1998). Highlighting the experience of distress and at times psychosocial disorder, Eurocentric paradigms have asserted that trauma descendants share a legacy of intergenerationally transmitted post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)-related psychosocial scars. Childhood memories of a familial "conspiracy" or "wall of silence" (Bar-On 1992) are said to shroud the history of parental suffering in oppressive silence. The powerful metaphor of the "wall of silence" (Bar-On 1992), ominously poised between psychically damaged survivors and their children, signifies not only the absence of vocal / verbal interaction regarding the genocidal past, but the absence of alternative forms of nonverbal intersubjective shared experience that might sensually evoke and transmit emotive and corporeal traces of difficult pasts. At once pathologizing and eliding the possibility of the lived experience of these silent embodied forms of presence of the past, scholars of memory, mental health practitioners and humanitarian workers worldwide have encouraged trauma survivors and their descendants to verbally articulate their repressed and silenced past of personal suffering and / or familial maladaptive relations. Talk therapy in therapeutic settings and public forms of testimony and commemoration aims to liberate the silenced past; it is put forth as not only psychically healing but also sociopolitically redemptive (Herman 1992) for the individual and the collective.

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

It will be claimed however that the above scholarly focus on pathological silence and redemption through verbal articulation has overshadowed the phenomenon of silent, tacit, and visceral multisensorial lived experience of genocidal pasts. The above logocentric readings of traumatic legacies obviate attempts to chart the taken-for-granted processes in which these corporeal sensibilities may have been intergenerationally transmitted from survivors to their descendants (Kidron 2009). Ethnographic accounts of Jewish-Israeli Holocaust trauma descendants will depict the process in which traces of the parental past are intersubjectively transmitted to descendants in the familial social milieu, via facial, gestural and partially verbal forms of interaction. Recalling Csordas's pioneering work on embodied forms of intersubjective engagement (Csordas 2002), survivor-descendant face-work and body-work form a matrix of "somatic modes of attention" through which descendants "attend to" their parents' embodied memories of the past and to their own emergent corporeal memories, in ways that may be particular to post-genocide intersubjective relations, thereby enabling descendants to engage in the silent phenomenal world of the survivor. In addition, descendant embodied practices continue to sustain the immanence of survivor family engagement with the genocidal lived body long after the Holocaust founding event. Problematizing scholarly understandings of traumatic legacies, the above silent and somatic forms of interaction ultimately allow descendants to share in what has been portrayed as the inaccessible and "sublime" death-world beyond representation, articulation, comprehension and knowledge (Langer 1991). Aiming to explore constitutive moments of this sensorial legacy of somatic engagement in the genocidal past and the embodied mechanisms of their transmission, this chapter will present an ethnography of descendant embodiment of the Holocaust past.

## Intergenerational Transmission of Genocidal Legacies

According to psychological research, trauma victims may suffer from a multitude of emotional and behavioral symptoms diagnosed as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (DSM IV 1994). In studies of Holocaust victims (Barocas and Barocas 1973) and Vietnam veterans (Rosenheck and Fontana 1998), the disorder was found to impair survivor/veteran parenting, whereby the effects of PTSD may potentially be transmitted to their children. Although nonclinical findings have failed to show evidence of psychopathology (Sagi-Schwartz et al. 2003), both clinical and nonclinical studies have found that descendants of Holocaust victims and Vietnam veterans may suffer from maladaptive behavioral patterns and a damaged sense of self (Dansby and Marinelli 1999; Zilberfein 1995).[1] According to the logic of the PTSD paradigm, if left untreated, the long-term psychosocial effects of survivor and/or shell shock trauma could be transmitted from generation to generation. Therapeutic treatment entails working through the effects of one's family's distant past and resultant reintegration of painful legacies (Bar-On 1992; Danieli 1998). Talk therapy in particular would allow the descendant to narratively integrate the past and to heal and "historically redeem" the destructive legacy (Herman 1992; Leys 2000).

Critical psychology and medical anthropology have deconstructed post-traumatic stress disorder, charting its cultural constitution as an idiom of illness (Kirmayer et al. 2009; Young 1995). As outlined above, somatization of trauma survivors has been

interpreted in accordance with culture-specific idioms of distress that have been found to shape their phenomenological experience of suffering and enable or disable the articulation of difficult pasts (Kleinman 1980). In some cases, cultural contexts have been examined as providing a "protective layer" allowing for resilience to the more deleterious effects of trauma (Foxen 2000). This transcultural approach to traumatic distress has sensitized scholars and health practitioners alike to the great diversity of psychic experience and the role of culture in the subjective and collective experience of trauma sufferers (Foxen 2000; Hinton 2004), and facilitated more effective culture sensitive care capable of "translating" cross-cultural languages of suffering. Nevertheless, the above paradigms and therapeutic practices continue to seek out and interpret a "language" or "voice" of suffering. In the absence of verbal articulation, trauma survivor silence and the emergent silent familial milieu has consistently been diagnosed as psychosocially maladaptive and distressing to its victims. With the exception, however, of my earlier work on the silent life-worlds of Holocaust descendants and their phenomenological experience of wellness or illness (Kidron 2009), no attempt has been made to determine whether alternative forms of sensorial and embodied intersubjective silent engagement in the parental past might constitute descendant legacies that might not be facilely classified as either distressing or traumatizing. Assuming that these nonverbal embodied legacies have emerged in the survivor life-world, we have yet to understand how the intersubjective process functions to transmit these legacies and whether we might consider this form of engagement as constituting embodied memories of the past.

## Embodied Memories of Genocide

How may we however understand the ambiguous concept of embodied memory? Even if we assume that our bodies can embed or embody sensual memories of past events – re-member our own memories in the members or membranes of the body – can memory be transmitted to other bodies, transmitted intergenerationally in the intimate family domain?

Embodiment has been understood by pioneers of body studies – such as Merleau-Ponty and Csordas – as a pre-reflexive and pre-rational process where embodiment marks the lived experience of the subject of and in the body as one's primary ontological experience of "being in the world" (Csordas 1994: 10) whereby the (practicing-) body and consciousness are inseparable (Merleau-Ponty 1962). Yet memory and the process of remembering is clearly reflexive – as we must reflect in order to recall events that have occurred in the past. How then are they juxtaposed in the term "embodied memory"? It would appear that memory – in our concept – refers to a pre-reflexive or a-reflexive experience of memory, namely the imprints of the past on the sensuous body (Young 2002) – the imprints of pain, pleasure, the smell or taste of home cooking, someone's touch or in my work – the embodied memory of trauma and the intersubjectively "transmitted" embodied memories of trauma.

Turning to the literature on the everyday mundane sensuous experience of the past, the last two decades have been witness to numerous path-breaking works on sensorial memories. Seremetakis (1994) describes the lingering taste and longing for oranges that only grew in her home town in Greece, and Stoller (1997), too, has provided

pioneering work on the nostalgic memory of smell in Malta. More recently, Howes's eclectic volume explores cross-cultural forms of multi-sensorial memory (Howes 2005). More pertinent to the research at hand, scholarly interest in the sensorial imprint of the violent past on the body has also triggered interest in the embodiment of traumatic memory. Beyond Scarry's seminal treatise on the lived experience of pain (1988), Casey (2000: 168) explores the constitutive power of habitual traumatic "body memory" where the past becomes immanent as we "ruminate" over corporeal suffering. Yet the above works do not explore if and how painful body memories may be transmitted beyond the lived bodies of their victims. Attempting to examine the externalization of traumatic memory, Bennett (2005) shows how art depicts the traumatic past, orchestrating "transactions between bodies." Das (1997) too has examined how pain and suffering impacts not only the individual victim but re-constitutes the relational and social world. Although Das does briefly explore empathic transactions between Indian women and the world around them, she however is more concerned with the tension between silent suffering and language than with the actual relational intersubjective mechanisms of empathy or intercorporeality.

Commemorative practice might be considered one pathway through which the body as a receptacle of a communal or national past reenacts and ultimately aims to transmit the past to a wider collective. Recalling Connerton's "postural performance that makes up the mnemonics of the body" (1989: 74), Argenti (2007) and Berliner (2005) document the fascinating process of ritual re-enactment of past trauma. The ethnographies, however, deal with public ritual events rather than what Halbwachs (1980) has termed mundane lived memory, the weaving of the past in the everyday private social milieu, where one might assume taken for granted familial transmission may take place. Empson's (2007) work on rebirth in Mongolia, or what we are more familiar with as reincarnation, depicts the body as a receptacle that allows the living to record the memory of deceased relatives allowing the dead and the living to share in the experience of sustained relations. Lambek's (1996) work on possession in Mayotte and Malagasy also depicts possession by spirits as a channel of communication and conduit for social relations with ancestors. Both may be understand as a form of commemoration through which one sustains the presence of the past in the present. Although these cases do explore the transmission and sharing of memory in family relations, both possession and reincarnation are ritualized and mystified as alternative states of consciousness. We therefore still do not know if and how everyday mundane intimate family intercorporeality actually occurs and how the transmission of embodied memory may be part and parcel of family relations.

Katherine Young (2002) for example describes somatic therapy, where the therapist reads and interprets a patient's bodily gestures and postures as inherited "ways of being-in-the-world" that materialize in the body (2002: 45). Bodily memories of interpersonal parent–child distressing relations imprinted on the body allow therapist and patient to engage with the past and work through "family–body" relations. However, beyond the focus on the absence of wellness / illness, we still do not know how the body acquired these family postures.

In order to chart the process of transmission of embodied memory and the constitution of descendant embodied memory I turn to phenomenological understandings of the lived body and intersubjective intercorporeality as outlined by Csordas, particularly

his conceptualization of "somatic modes of attention" (Csordas 1993). As descendant intercorporeality will be shown to entail a reflective component alongside the pre-reflective process of somatic modes of attention, symbolic interactionist and ethnomethodological theories of facework and intersubjectivity will enable a complementary synthesis of both semiotic and phenomenological analyses of meaning making and lived experience.

## Methodology

A broad ethnographic study of Israeli Holocaust descendants was undertaken between 2000 and 2005. The study, entailing 55 in-depth interviews with children of Holocaust survivors and participant observation at survivor and descendant sites of memory, found that Holocaust descendants depict the survivor home as embedding what respondents claimed was the nonpathological presence of the Holocaust past within silent embodied practices, person–object interaction and person–person interaction. These silent traces were seen to form an experiential matrix of Holocaust presence that functioned to sustain familial "lived memory" of the past within the everyday private social milieu (Kidron 2009). In the present chapter, I focus on the descendants' lived experience of embodied memory.

## Somatic Modes of Attention and Embodied Memories of Genocide

When asking Rebecca, a child of survivors in her early fifties if the Holocaust was present in her home she responded:

> *Rebecca*: When I was little, I was afraid to sleep alone. My father would stay with me until I fell asleep but sometimes he'd fall asleep and stay with me all night. Sometimes I'd wake up and hear him crying … in his sleep. It was more like … like whimpering [long pause] like a baby. Thinking about it today, I guess it was awful but then … you know we didn't know better.
>
> *Carol*: What do you mean "we didn't know better"?
>
> *Rebecca*: We didn't know why they were crying. That's just the way it was.
>
> *Carol*: So do you remember what you thought about this?
>
> *Rebecca*: I guess … I don't know … I thought he was dreaming … you know nightmares.
>
> *Carol*: Do you remember when you started to know why he was crying?
>
> *Rebecca*: I think it was after … I remember talking to my mother about it. Besides the crying, my father also sweat a lot in his sleep. He was always cold at night. I remember the way he'd pull the blanket over his head … one of his hands would slowly come up out of the blanket and he'd quickly, cover his head. …it could be summer and he'd still be shivering. I can … remember … helping him … cover his head. [Long silence, tears well up in her eyes.] In the morning the bed sheets would be drenched … because it really wasn't cold. My mother would complain about this all the time. How terrible it was to sleep with … all that. I still remember the smell of sweat … strong and sour. Wow … I haven't

> thought about this in years. [short pause.] I remember watching her change the sheets one day and she said "every night he's back in the camp." I think that's when I realized that his crying was not just a nightmare… it was real… he was remembering, I guess… feeling the cold, the suffering, all over again.

In the above moving account, Rebecca recalls the immanence (Casey 2000) of the Holocaust past in her taken-for-granted lived memories of her childhood. Although the supportive presence of a parent assuaging their child's fear at bedtime is a banal occurrence, for Rebecca, it provide a little-understood opportunity to "attend to" (Csordas 1993) her father's body-memories of the Holocaust past. Recalling Eve, the descendant cited elsewhere who would periodically wake up to her mother's cries and cover her head with her pillow or get up to ask her father to calm her mother's nightly cries (Kidron 2009), Rebecca, too, depicts the habitual practice of waking up to her father's whimpering and her "attendance" (Csordas 1993) to his attempt to keep warm. It might be noted how she astutely remembers the most intricate kinetic gestures of his swift hand movement as her father attempts to enclose himself, almost cocoon-like, from the dangers of the outside world, and to the way his body would shiver nonetheless. Utilizing Csordas's conceptualization of "somatic modes of attention" (1993), Rebecca's body not only attends to her father's embodied responses, but to her own kinetic lived-bodily memory of helping him cover his head and to her own olfactory sense memory of the pungent smell of his sweat-stained sheets. It is precisely the recollection of her own empathic gesture to cover his head that evokes the only tearful response in the emotively intense interview. Although the descendant is not "reading" verbal or even gestural signs representing her father's virtual presence and reenactment of Holocaust corporeal suffering, she is most certainly viscerally sharing or "engaging in" the horizon of his embodied re-experience of the past (Csordas 1993).

Although we might ask how the descendant self might share in the sensual "(re)-experience" of the survivor Other, share in a Holocaust experience that she herself did not existentially experience, as Csordas (in dialog with Merleau Ponty) explains, "because body and consciousness are one, intersubjectivity is also a co-presence; another's emotion is immediate because it is grasped pre-objectively as they share a common habitus" (Csordas 2002: 257). Paraphrasing Csordas, if the survivor body is experienced not as object "but as another myself" (2002: 85), intersubjective communication and intercorporeality is made possible. Were we to insist on divesting the self from the other in the grips of a more "authentic" Holocaust experience, we might paraphrase Kapferer, stating that the survivor's experience is made Rebecca's experience as she experiences *her* experience of co-presence with the survivor father (Kapferer 1986: 189). Yet from the perspective of body theory, it is precisely co-presence of sensorial bodies interacting intersubjectively that allows for empathic, con-subjective lived experience.

Considering that as a child, Rebecca did not "know better," that she did not know that her father was re-experiencing the Holocaust past, can one read the above account as the transmission of embodied Holocaust memories? Although Rebecca would later meaningfully reframe her sensual memories as Holocaust-related, at the time of their constitution they were apparently inexplicable. Nevertheless, one cannot deny that they appear to have been interwoven in her most early sensorial memories of being-in-the-world, integral to what may be said to constitute the descendant's lived body and lived experience in and of

the body. If, as Csordas asserts, embodiment and somatic modes of attention might be culturally specific, then whether Rebecca is aware of the Holocaust source of her early body memories or not does not alter the fact that her body-self has been constituted by the particular domestic matrix of familial practice (Holstein and Gubrim 1994) of a genocide death-world (Neumann 2000).

Returning for a moment to the literature cited above, it should also be noted that Rebecca does not describe her father's whimpering and shivering as pathological or even psychologically maladaptive re-enactment or herself as victim to pathological intergenerational transmission (Auerhahn and Laub 1998). Instead, her father is depicted as merely inexplicably suffering from the cold and later, after the insight received from her mother, as virtually present in the genocide past.

Unlike Rebecca, Ricki gives us a first glimpse of a strategic act of intercorporeality and perhaps a clearer glimpse at the transmission of an embodied memory of the Holocaust:

> I used to sit with my father and stare at his number [tattoo on his arm]… long and hard… [long pause, tears well up in her eyes]. I would try to imagine what it was like to be… branded. What it felt like when they burned it into his flesh. Did it hurt? Was he scared? I would stare until [her voice breaks]… I could [she can't speak, long pause]… until I could… [she composes herself with difficulty]… feel it on my arm. [During her description, Ricki's hand moves to touch her arm, as if the body re-senses her vicarious branding.]

Like Rebecca, Ricki somatically attends to the survivor body, in her case to her father's tattooed arm, the sign of his Otherness as Holocaust survivor. Yet unlike Rebecca, Ricki is aware of and reflects on the semiotic referential meaning of the surviving traces of the Holocaust past on the survivor's body and she goes one step farther to utilize the tattoo as Bell's "portable place" (1997), as medium of chronotopic travel capable of taking her to her father's Holocaust past. Despite temporal/spatial barriers, if stared at long enough, she may accomplish the empathic feat of vicariously "being together in concerted time" (Sharon 1982) with her father during his "branding." She does not seek historical knowledge of the event but rather if "it hurt" or if "it scare[d] him." Ricki longs for a shared experiential world via the "memory of the flesh" (Young 2002). Yet how could Ricki possibly feel the branding on her own arm? Ricki has never been branded, how then could she imagine the experience? Psychological discourse might diagnose Ricki as suffering from heteropathic identification, the pathological ability to take on the memory of others. According to Csordas (1993: 149) "The turning toward that constitutes the object of attention cannot be determinate in terms of subject or object but rather real in terms of intersubjectivity." In the case above, intersubjectivity is fueled by what Young terms "patterns of love, yearning and desire" that can create a sense of embodiment even if that past has not been personally experienced (Young 2002: 45). Ricki's loving link to her father and empathy with his pain thus allows for the constitution of the object of Ricki's imagination, at once an imagined yet very "real" lived experience (Csordas 1993). As will be discussed below, if, as Csordas asserts, imagination is not only a visual modality of experience but rather a sensory mode of experience then Ricki's imaginary "perception" of the

branding of her father's and her own arm need not necessarily be conceptualized as solely a "mental" reflective process.

One might assert however that Ricki's experience is only a rare attempt at empathy and vicarious experience. It is also doubtful that the descendant experiences or senses the imprint of her own vicarious tattoo on a regular basis in everyday life. We may ask then: Are there traces of the Holocaust past embedded within the everyday, taken-for-granted lives of children of survivors and perhaps embedded in their everyday lived bodies?

## Face Work and Empathic Intersubjectivity

Descendants depicted another variant on the above somatic modes of attention, namely nonverbal or partially verbal intersubjective interchanges between parent and child which entailed the more frequent attendance to parental facial gestures or "face work" (Goffman 1967). The "reading" of parental facial expressions took place most often during moments in which survivors silently reminisced on the ruptured life world of their pre-Holocaust lives or painfully recalled war-time suffering. Hannah recounts these moments as follows:

> *Hannah*: In certain moods my mother would go into her bedroom closet and pull down her box. She would open it up gently, like it would break if she did it quickly or roughly… she would take out photos of her parents and her fiancé, who were all killed in the war. She would sit down on the bed and I would sit very quietly next to her. She would stare at the people in the pictures for a long time, sometimes smiling, sometimes sadly. Usually I kept quiet… but… sometimes I would ask questions like… what she did with her fiancé "in those days" or I'd tell her how handsome he was. She'd like that – she would get this funny smile like a teenage girl… and she'd smile down at me… [long pause]… It was very special… [long pause] because we didn't usually… share things… well not that way.
>
> *Carol*: Did she answer your questions?
>
> *Hannah*: Not really… maybe a few words here and there about how her parents didn't like him that much… but no… not really.
>
> *Carol*: Did you ever ask her what happened to them?
>
> *Hannah*: No, I couldn't… I mean… when she was looking at them she looked happy, different, I couldn't remind her that… and at the end… well anyway she'd take a very deep breath and quickly put everything back in the box and say something coldly about getting back to my homework… and she'd lose that look in her eyes she had when she was… back there, well you know, of longing. Her eyes would go blank again.

Despite the presence of verbal interaction, silent face work is the primary conduit of parent–child interaction and meaning making ushering the descendant into the past and into the parent's feeling world. Hannah clearly reads her mother's facial gestures as "recognizable tokens of meaning" (Sacks 1970) – to determine the moments of her mother's passage into the distant past (the long gaze into the photos, her sad or smiling-happy face) and out of the past (deep breath, blank eyes, emotionless expression) and utilizes the accompanying alterations in her feeling world so that she may trace and share the passage with her. In interactionist terms, facial gestures, as

tokens of meaning, allow Hannah to infer her horizon of expectations as to the emotional trajectory, fragility and even the duration of their nostalgic journey in the past. As her mother moves between bittersweet yet inviting intimacy and cold emotional absence, Hannah knows when she may quietly sit and enjoy mother–daughter intimacy, when she may ask questions or make commentary, and finally when she must return to the more customary mundane moments of present everyday life with her cold and emotionally absent mother.

It may be asserted that Hannah's respect for the emotional rules of the interaction order allow her to be a full and empowered, albeit by and large silent, participant in her mother's journey into the past. Despite the above self-imposed limits, Hannah highlights the positive nature of her experience, she relishes her mother's happy and rejuvenating interaction with the images of the past and is apparently undisturbed by her mother's failure to verbally respond to most of her questions, complacent to sit in silence or make rhetorical commentary. Once again, upon the culmination of the virtual journey into the past, survivor parents return from "there," a return clearly signified again in their facial gestures – primarily in the "blank" apathetic look in their eyes as the tell-tale sign of the restored absence of emotional presence.

The above example of descendant–survivor interaction provides perhaps a variation on Csordas's conception of somatic modes of attention (2002). Hannah clearly reads and interprets semiotic messages given off (Goffman 1967) or represented in her mother's face. Considering that body theorists have pointedly highlighted the habitual "doing" and "being" of the lived body, rather than the signification of the symbolizing body (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987), the question remains as to whether Hannah's experience above might be considered a somatic mode of attention. Undertaking a close reading of her account, Hannah's encounter with her mother most certainly evokes a diverse array of emotions in both mother and child. As Hannah hesitantly explains, these moments were quite rare, and special. Sitting intimately close to her usually distant mother on her bed, exchanging warm smiles and laughter, it might be asserted that the descendant is sensually experiencing what Katz (1999) has depicted as interactive strategies designed to aesthetically present the survivor's otherwise inaccessible feeling world to those around them. Moving beyond mere semiotic signification of emotion, Katz explains that crying and laughter allows one to both transcend the present situation and then bridge the unbridgeable worlds of mundane everyday reality and share intense personal experience of joy, loss or suffering (Katz 1999: 330). Thus although interactants may not be able to access the content of emotive experience, they are nonetheless "invited" to join the emotional self of the other and empathically partake in and respond to their feeling world. Thus just as erotic pleasure may be understood as embodied experience engendering embodied memory of intercorporeality (Casey 2000), it would seem that the perhaps less physically intense but no less emotionally moving moments of intimacy above may be sensually imprinted on the young descendant and retained as embodied memories of her mother. We thus might consider the synthesis of both semiotic and lived experiences concomitantly occurring in the process of transmission of embodied memory.

When critically examining Rebecca's, Ricki's and Hannah's somatic engagement with the survivor body and their "embodied memories" of this engagement, it becomes apparent that descendants viscerally and sensually recall diverse forms of

empathic attendance to the habitual practicing survivor body culminating in moments of intercorporeality. Nevertheless, we have yet to consider the possibility that the Holocaust past would permanently mark their own lived bodies, engendering genocide related embodied practices that would be experienced long after parent–child sensorial encounters.

## Re-membered Embodied Practices

Although beyond the scope of the present chapter, descendants depict numerous embodied practices which they attribute to the Holocaust past, including food-related practices, health and hygiene, and finally practices of survival (Kidron 2009). When asked about the presence of the Holocaust in the home, Emma recounts her nightly practice as follows:

> *Emma*: Every night, at a very young age, maybe 6 or 7, I would prepare my shoes, placing them next to my bed, so that if the Nazis came I would have shoes ready. I would also fold my clothes in a way that would be easy to put on.

Emma phenomenologically experiences the presence of the Holocaust in the silent "micro-moments and micro-acts" of daily life (Bakhtin 1981). The habitual practice of preparing for bed and laying out ones clothes become shaped by association with the distant conditions of the Holocaust death-world. For the seven year-old Emma, shoes were an essential tool of survival. When I ask Emma to trace the source of her practice, she repeats again the habitual motions of placing the shoes in the front of her bed, as if both the cause and effect of her mundane past were stored and re-membered in the motions of the kinetic body. She recounts: "I remember placing the shoes … in front of my bed so that if I had to get up and I had to wear the shoes in a hurry I would be able to." As if reading my mind, Emma asks "Why were shoes so important?" and she responds as follows:

> My mother apparently told me how she walked in the snow. I remember her saying how cold it was, how she almost froze to death. Now I know it was the Death March. Then it didn't matter what it was, just that it was something terrible. Then I just desperately wanted to have shoes handy … so that I wouldn't have to walk barefoot in the snow, so I would prepare it in such a way, so that if the Nazis came…

After a hesitant and what seemed a thoughtful pause, Emma continued to trace the source of her practice: "Now it wasn't that my mother sat down and told me what had happened to her. I think I just picked up on all sorts of things that floated in the home."

Emma insists she does not recall being directly taught to prepare her shoes for a death march nor did she "sit down" with her mother to be told a full narrative about her ordeal; we thus lack the founding moments depicted above. Echoing once again Merleau-Ponty's (1962: 137) assertion that practice is pre-reflective, consciousness for Emma is primarily a pragmatic matter of "I can do," a practice, rather than an intellectual "I know why I do it." Attempting nevertheless to isolate the source of her

practice, Emma recounts that she was "apparently" told a fragmented story about her mother's walk in the snow only to later suggest instead that she "picked up on all sorts of things that floated in the home" and then "put things together."

Although the above account may most certainly be conceptualized as an embodied practice, it is far less clear whether one might use the term embodied memory to describe a practice for which there may or may not be a phenomenally experienced founding event. Not only did Emma not march in the snow or escape in the midst of night, she also cannot describe a recollected moment of vicarious empathy and transmission in which Emma attended to her mother's body as she herself prepared for sleep or was taught to prepare in this way at a very young age. At first glance we might consider that she may not have a bodily experience to re-member. What then might we say Emma has attended to? In her analysis of Anlo-Ewe embodiment of the fetal position, Guerts (2003) asserts that the Anlo body posture, originating in cultural mythic time, is sustained through a synthesis of both intersubjective embodied practice "unconsciously" woven into Anlo-Ewe life-world and cognitive mechanisms of transmission. Here too, it is difficult to determine how and when Emma tacitly attended to parental sensibilities "that floated in the home" or, how in response to fragmented tales she imagined corporeal sensations into phenomenal lived experience. Although we cannot be certain of how her shoes as cultural object came to be perceived as integral tools of survival, what we may however surmise from the three accounts that preceded her tale is that within the indeterminacy of Holocaust related sensations and emotions – be they "witnessed" or imagined – survivor parent and child phenomenologically perceive the continued presence of the past in and through their bodies and thus constitute the very "real" lived experience of genocide.

## Discussion

It may be concluded that, contrary to the literature regarding the impermeable wall of silence poised between parent and child, permitting only pathological "transmissions" of the effects of trauma, and culminating in the absence of presence of the Holocaust past in the survivor home, ethnographic accounts of Holocaust descendants depict the process of transmission of sensorial and emotional embodied experience and the emergence of an alternative corporeal genocidal legacy. The survivor home is seen to embed the presence of the Holocaust past within silent forms of intersubjectivity, intercorporeality and embodied practices. After examining the process of constitution and transmission of these practices, it is been proposed that these silent traces form an experiential matrix of Holocaust presence that functions to sustain familial "lived-body memory" of the past and to intergenerationally transmit embodied memories of the past within the everyday familial social milieu.

If we attempt to decipher the process of intercorporeality and transmission, there is no doubt the Csordas model of somatic modes of attention and Merleau-Ponty's foundational phenomenological perspective have allowed us to grapple with Rebecca's pre-reflective intersubjective encounter with her father, the power of con-subjectivity to constitute the "reality" of Ricki's branding, and perhaps Emma's tacit sense of danger "picked up" in her home. All three women re-member their own bodily sensations or kinesthetic movements that emerged within the corporeal horizon shared

with their survivor parents (the sensorially-imagined branding on ones arm, the movement to cover the whimpering survivor, the smell of the sheets, and the positioning of the shoes), sensations that evolved in response to their pre-reflective engagement with the survivor body.

Yet when considering Hannah's account of mother–daughter face-work and the beginning of Ricki's account of her father's branding, a different descendant experience emerges. Both these women describe a reflective "journey" in which they must "go there" to the parental past either to the pre-Holocaust life-world or Holocaust life–death-world. The imaginative process of "going there" in the case of trauma survivors may not merely be a case of sensorial pre-reflective intersubjective experience for, as Hannah explains, the survivor parent may not always be "giving off meaning." Yet beyond the semiotics of shared meaning, even on a pre-reflective level, one might ask if (despite the horizon of shared perception) a "shared disposition" or common habitus requisite for intersubjectivity is always possible with those who have experienced sublime death-worlds. Although, as stated above, aspects of the survivor body-self become inevitably "real" and therefore "known" to the descendant body, other emotive and corporeal experiences may remain out of bounds. Albeit my adamant assertion that scholars should not accept the negative semiotics used to depict the sublime experience of trauma (Kidron 2009), and that embodied descendant memories point to the rich world of shared experience, I would nonetheless like to consider that extreme bodily and emotive suffering may constitute embodied experience beyond the limits of intersubjectivity. Csordas's (1993: 147) re-conceptualization of imagination as sensory imagery that bridges the experiential gap provides one solution to the dilemma, allowing us to understand the imaginative act of "going there" as an imaginal and not visual or cognitive feat of empathic and sensually shared experience. However, if certain corporeal experiences are beyond sensorial intersubjectivity – and cannot be pre-reflectively "done" (Merleau-Ponty) without genocide experience – then perhaps we have no choice but to consider Hannah's and Ricki's imaginative journey to the past as a reflective "mental" process of conjuring a world that cannot entirely be embodied without reflection?

In order to avoid slippage into "mentalist" models, I would like to supplement my analysis of somatic modes of attention with other interactionist and phenomenological readings of con-subjectivity that I believe might bridge cognitive and lived participatory lived experiences. According to Sharon, two individuals may coordinate what he terms "inner times" or individual rhythms to achieve "concert time" (Sharon 1982: 72). However "togetherness requires something beyond physical proximity, it requires the merger of inner times which enables shared understanding" (72). Citing Schutz, Sharon explains that the merger of inner times requires that two people share moods, and emotions and "tune in a relationship" (73). Only if they are both engrossed in the "there" of the past, can they reach what Luckmann (1991: 156) terms "the synchronization of two streams of consciousness" or concert time and consequently "be there together." Thus as reflected in the accounts above, only if the descendant responds empathically to their parents, attempting reflectively to conjure up unfamiliar sensations of pain / discomfort (in the case of Ricki) or pleasure and longing (in the case of Hannah) can they concertedly "be there together."

Both Katz's analysis above and Sharon's analysis point to the fact that emotional gestures and resultant emotional togetherness in concerted time may be capable of

opening up a liminal space where otherwise inaccessible imagined places, become virtually present. Although the above scholarly analysis may "theoretically" explain how the descendants are able to "be together" with their parents in the Holocaust past made present, one still may ask how they "share" and "merge" inner times or places when there has been no commonality of experience and shared dispositions? Bakhtin asserts that although dialogic embodiment entails intercarnality, the uniqueness of every event in the world and I-for-myself in the world limits intersubjective embodied dialog to "overlapping fields of vision" (Bender 1998: 139). Although this implies that the child will never experience the entirety of the authentic Holocaust event, Bakhtin's use of the term "participatory thinking" might allow us to conceptualize descendant "thought" as both reflective and emotively participatory. Levy Bruhl's term "participatory thinking" is utilized to highlight the ability to bridge cognitive categories that logical thought separates. Once for example the category of self and other or here and there are bridged, the mind becomes open to participate in experience while infused with the mystical force of emotional and imaginal content. This form of thought is reflective, it is undertaken from *within* the descendant's embodied / emotive interaction with the survivor as the "I for the other," "processually wraps herself around the other" toward shared experience.

As Bakhtinian readings of participative thinking is inextricably wound up with the sensuous feeling world, we may move beyond a dichotomous reading of the two paradigms of cognitive / hermeneutic-semiotics and embodiment. Recalling Csordas's assertion that semiotic and phenomenological analyses of the lived body are not mutually exclusive, but may rather complement and supplement one another (Csordas 2002: 242), the above synthesis allows for a holistic interpretation of the intersubjective interaction of both reflective lived bodies and body-selves. As seen in the data above, descendants concomitantly seek out the signs of meaningful survivor scars, face-work and kinetic gestures and practices while perpetually responding sensually and often tacitly to the shared experience of intercorporeality. It may also be claimed that the imaginative constitution of virtual sensorial co-presence in the past would not be possible without the braiding of these two strands of semiotic and lived-corporeal experience.

Returning to the ambiguity of our term embodied-memory, although we must certainly problematize the second half of our hyphenated concept – embodied-memory questioning the existential reality of descendant memory – perhaps descendant accounts call upon us to continue to consider Halbwachs's (1980) assertion that lived social and relational memory does not refer to the existential experience of remembering an event as actually lived but rather the lived experience of social life in which and through which we sustain the presence of the past. If the body in all its sensorial complexity is one of the key topos of the perpetuation of past suffering, pleasure and human intimacy and empathy, then one may then speak of the descendant legacy of lived embodied memory.

Considering the rampant increase in the utilization of the illness constructs of post-traumatic stress disorder, intergenerationally transmitted trauma, and vicarious (secondary) trauma to diagnose and treat a wide array of contemporary distress and the exportation of these constructs to diverse socio-cultural contexts, it is only fitting that we capitalize on the conceptual tools of phenomenology and symbolic interaction to explore alternative nonpathological silent forms of emotive and sensorial intergenerational processes of transmission. Although there is no doubt that intimate

and empathic moments of survivor parent–child interaction are born of tragic events of personally and collectively catastrophic proportion, they need not be solely perceived as emotionally crippling to familial relations and the emergent descendant self. Although humanitarian interventionist agendas most certainly aim to ameliorate either the psychosocial and emotional wellbeing of survivors and their families or politically empower and liberate the silenced and subjugated, a culture-sensitive examination of micro-local / communal or religious / ethnic specific conceptualizations of the subtle meanings of silence, the role of memory in everyday life, of commemoration and mourning, and the re-presence of traces of the past, and finally wellness and illness is called for prior to the collective enlistment of patients, witnesses and trauma-related testimony.

## NOTE

1 In contrast to clinical studies, the majority of nonclinical studies have found no significant differences between the second generation and control groups. Having found no evidence of psychopathology or severe emotional problems, recent studies have tested for alternative attachment behavior and representations (Bar-On 1992; Sagi-Schwartz et al. 2003). Once again, evidence of maladaptive behavior has not been found. These findings have brought about a shift in terminology in clinical studies from the transmission of trauma (or secondary traumatization) to the "intergenerational effects of trauma."

## REFERENCES

Argenti, N., 2007 The Intestines of the State: Youth, Violence, and Belated Histories in the Cameroon Grassfields. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Auerhahn, N. C. and Laub D., 1998 Intergenerational Memory of the Holocaust. *In* International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma. Y. Danieli, ed. pp. 21–41. New York: Plenum Press

Bakhtin, M. M., 1981 The Dialogic Imagination. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Barocas, H. A. and C. Barocas, 1973 Manifestations of Concentration Camp Effects on the Second Generation, American Journal of Psychiatry 130(7): 820–821.

Bar-On, D., 1992 Israeli and German Students Encounter the Holocaust through a Group Process: "Working Through" and "Partial Relevance."' International Journal of Group Tensions 22(2): 81–118.

Bell, M. M., 1997 The Ghosts of Place. Theory and Society 26: 813–836.

Bender, C., 1998 Bakhtinian Perspectives on Every Day Life Sociology. *In* Bakhtin and the Human Sciences, M. Gardiner and M. M. Bell, eds. pp. 181–195. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Bennett, J., 2005 Empathic Vision: Affect, Trauma and Contemporary Art. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Berliner, D., 2005 An "Impossible" Transmission: Youth Religious Memories in Guinea-Conakry. American Ethnologist 32: 576–592.

Casey, E. S., 2000 Remembering: A Phenomenological Study. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Connerton, P., 1989 How Societies Remember. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Csordas, T. J., 1993 Somatic Modes of Attention. Cultural Anthropology 8: 135–156.

Csordas, T. J., 1994 Introduction: The Body as Representation and Being-in-the-World. *In* Embodiment and Experience. T. J Csordas, ed. pp. 1–24. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Csordas, T. J., 2002 Body / Meaning / Healing. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
Danieli, Y., 1998 Introduction: History and Conceptual Foundations. *In* International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma. Y. Danieli, ed. pp. 1–17. New York: Plenum Press.
Dansby, V. S. and R. P. Marinelli, 1999 Adolescent Children of Vietnam Combat Veteran Fathers: A Population at Risk, Journal of Adolescence 22(3): 329–40.
Das, V., 1997 Language and Body: Transactions in the Construction of Pain. *In* Social Suffering. A. Kleinman, V. Das and M. Lock, eds. pp. 67–91. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press.
Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: DSM IV, 1994 Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association.
Empson, R., 2007 Enlivened Memories: Recalling Absence and Loss in Mongolia. *In* Ghosts of Memory: Essays on Relatedness and Remembering. J. Carsten, ed. pp. 52–82. Oxford: Blackwell.
Fassin, D. J., 2009 The Humanitarian Politics of Testimony: Subjectification Through Trauma in the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict. Cultural Anthropology 23: 531–558.
Foxen, P., 2000 Cacophony of Voices: A Kiche Mayan Narrative of Remembrance and Forgetting. Transcultural Psychiatry 37: 355–381.
Goffman, E., 1967 Interaction Ritual: Essays in Face-to-face Behavior. Garden City, New York: Doubleday.
Guerts, K. L., 2003 On Embodied Consciousness in Anlo Ewe Worlds. Ethnography 4: 363–395.
Halbwachs, M. 1980 The Collective Memory. pp. 68–87. New York: Harper Colophon Books.
Herman, J. L., 1992 Trauma and Recovery. New York: Basic Books.
Hinton, A. L., 2004 Why Did They Kill: Cambodian in the Shadow of Genocide. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Holstein, J. F. and J. A. Gubrium, 1994 Constructing Family: Descriptive Practice and Domestic Order. *In* Constructing the Social. J. Sarbin and J. Kitsuse, eds. pp. 232–250. London: Sage.
Howes, D., 2005 Introduction. Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader. D. Howes, ed. pp. 1–20. Oxford: Berg.
Kapferer B., 1986 Performance and the Structuring of Experience. *In* The Anthropology of Experience. V. Turner and E. Bruner, eds. pp. 188–203. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
Katz, J., 1999 How Emotions Work. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Kidron, C. A., 2009 Toward an Ethnography of Silence: The Lived Presence of the Past in the Everyday Lives of Holocaust Trauma Descendants in Israel. Current Anthropology 50(1): 5–27.
Kirmayer, L. J., H. Kienzler, A. Afana, and D. Petersen, 2009 Trauma and Disasters in Social and Cultural Context. *In* Principles of Social Psychiatry, 2nd edition. New York: Wiley-Blackwell.
Kleinman, A., 1980 Patients and Healers in the Context of Culture. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Lambek, M., 1996 The Past Imperfect: Remembering as a Moral Practice. *In* Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory. P. Antze and M. Lambek, eds. pp. 235–254. New York: Routledge.
Langer, L. L., 1991 Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory. New Haven: Yale University Press.
Leys, R., 2000 Trauma: A Genealogy. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Luckmann, T., 1991 The Constitution of Human Life in Time. *In* Chronotypes: The Construction of Time. J. Bender and D.E. Wellbery, eds. pp. 151–166. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Merleau-Ponty, M., 1962 The Phenomenology of Perception. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Neumann, B., 2000 The National Socialist Weltanschauung – Space, Body, Language. Haifa: Haifa University Press.

Rosenheck, R. and A. Fontana, 1998 Transgenerational Effects of Abusive Violence on the Children of Vietnam Combat Veterans. Journal of Traumatic Stress 11(4): 731–42.

Rousseau, C. and A. Drapeau, 1998 The Impact of Culture on the Transmission of Trauma: Refugees' Stories and Silence Embodied in Their Children's Lives. *In* International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma. Y. Danieli, ed. pp. 465–485. New York: Plenum Press.

Sacks, H., 1970 Lecture #4 April 23, 1970. Mimeograph.

Sagi-Schwartz, A. et al., 2003 Attachment and Traumatic Stress in Female Holocaust Child Survivors and Their Daughters. American Journal of Psychiatry 160(6): 1086–1092.

Scarry, E., 1988 The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Scheper-Hughes, N. and M. Lock, 1987 The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work in Medical Anthropology. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 1: 6–41.

Seremetakis, C. N., 1994 The Memory of the Senses, Part I: Marks of the Transitory. *In* The Senses Still: Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity. C. N. Seremetakis, ed. pp. 1–18. Boulder, San Francisco and Oxford: Westview.

Sharon, A., 1982 Dimensions of Time. Studies in Symbolic Interaction 4: 63–89.

Stoller, P., 1997 Sensuous Scholarship. Philadelphia : University of Pennsylvania Press.

Young, A., 1995 Harmony of Illusions: Inventing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Young, K. G., 2002 The Memory of the Flesh: The Family Body in Somatic Psychology. Body and Society 8: 25–47.

Zilberfein, F., 1995 Children of Holocaust Survivors: Separation Obstacles, Attachments and Anxiety. *In* A Global Perspective on Working with Holocaust Survivors and the Second Generation. J. Lemberger, ed. pp. 413–422. Jerusalem: JDC-Brookdale Institute and Amcha.

CHAPTER 27

# TASTING FOOD
## *Tasting between the Laboratory and the Clinic*

*Annemarie Mol*

For a long time, cultural anthropologists have been seeking to add their own specific knowledge about bodies to that of their biologically and biomedically minded colleagues. Bodies, they have argued in various modes and modalities, are not just bags of organs, cybernetic systems, or collections of functions – they are also a matter of meaning, experience and identity. And while the human being's physicalities may be universally the same, or almost, the way bodies are interpreted varies from one cultural context to another. Excellent studies have been written to develop this. They draw on ethnographies of daily life, fashion, dance, labor, healing practices, and so on, undertaken all around the globe. Some have concentrated on the symbolic side of things, others have shifted to practices that bodies engage in. Some have concentrated on movements or looks, others have shifted to bodily involvements in eating and drinking. (Among my favorites here are: Farqhuar 2002, Holtzman 2009 and Mintz 1996.) I have no argument with this work, but in this chapter I seek to do something different: I will ask questions about how our biologically and biomedically minded colleagues study, treat and care for "the body." In doing so, I insert myself into another tradition, one that draws on ethnographies of – primarily and / or predominantly Western – scientific and professional practices. In this tradition "biological work" and "biomedical work" and what it makes of "organs, cybernetic systems, or collections of functions" becomes the object of research. Thus, biology and biomedicine are not supplemented. They are opened up.

The use of the term *work* is crucial to the tradition at hand. It shifts some of the attention from the results of research processes and the principles laid down in

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

textbooks, to what happens in laboratories and clinics. It invites one to link questions to do with how bodies are represented, to questions about how they are handled. Anatomists and surgeons cut bodies with sharp knives; histologists color tissues so as to make "structures" visible under a microscope; neurologists carefully hit knee tendons with a rubber hammer and in doing so induce reflexes; gastroenterologists insert small cameras into the intestines – emptied out for the occasion – and technicians prick veins so that blood samples may be measured. Nurses teach people to inject their own insulin, wash patients who may or may not collaborate, feed tiny babies and dress bedsores and wounds. On and on it goes: in and with their various ways of working, scientists and professionals put bodies to various tests. No wonder that bodies, in their turn, respond to these tests in different ways (Despret 2004). This is not just a matter of interpretation, but a physical – fleshy, material – phenomenon as well. For in "tests," invariably, in one way or another, knowing and intervening intertwine.

How, for instance, to test whether or not a body has anemia? There is a clinical and a laboratory way of doing so. Clinically, one looks at the eyelids and nailbeds: in anemia these are white. It is also possible to talk with patients: if they report dizziness, lack of breath upon exercise and overall tiredness, this might indicate anemia, too. The laboratory way of working is to draw some blood and insert it in a hemoglobin-measurement device. If the blood's level of hemoglobin is below a certain threshold value (say: 13 grams per deciliter) this signals anemia too – but differently so.

In textbooks "paleness," "dizziness" and "a low hemoglobin level" are presented as complementary aspects of anemia. In practice, however, there are serious differences between them. First, the relevant ways of working are different. Establishing clinical signs depends on professionals with clinical skills: it is not obvious how to "see" that eyelids and nail beds are "white" (that is paler than they should be), this is something that clinicians (be they doctors or nurses) first have to learn. Finding out about "dizziness" and other complaints does not just demand good professionals: it also depends on attentive and articulate patients. And no matter how well everything and everyone collaborates, in the clinic the dividing line between "anemic" and "not anemic" remains necessarily fluid. Laboratory diagnosis, in its turn, depends on drawing blood. This involves sterilized needles, calibrated machines, skilled technicians and sufficient time. And, crucially, there needs to be a standard by which to assess what is deviant: the normal hemoglobin level. This makes for a sharp dividing line between normal and deviant, that, at the same time, may be established in various ways: individually or statistically; by measuring all the members of a target population or by first picking out those who are clinically healthy – and so on (Mol 1999).

A lot more examples can be found in the literature. There is an excellent study exploring how bodies (and mothers, partners, pain, birth itself and so on) are staged differently in different practices of giving birth (Akrich and Pasveer 2000). There is another where we learn how "blood pressure" is enacted differently by anesthetists and surgeons even though, given their respective tasks in brain surgery, they have to constantly negotiate about it (Moreira 2006). There is a critical analysis that compares two contrasting rehabilitation treatments for people with a cerebrovascular accident. It shows that the parameters of success that are used to compare these treatments in clinical trials systematically favor one over the other (Lettinga and Mol 1999). And, to give just one more example for now: telecare devices designed to support patients with chronic diseases help to care for very different problems. Measurement devices

may monitor an individual's weight, thus taking "the problem" to reside inside the patient's heart: a sudden rise in weight may indicate that, due to heart disease, fluids are being retained. Webcams, by contrast, encourage their users to ask their nurses about, and jointly discuss, a variety of daily life issues, thus supporting patients with another "problem" altogether, that of taking care of themselves and living their daily lives (Pols 2010).

What these studies show in their various ways is that care practices do not follow from "the facts about the body." Instead, in practice "the facts about the body" are not even given first. The question which "facts" to bring to light and make relevant is always itself an important issue (Mol 2002). Take a person's hemoglobin level. In order for this to become a fact blood has to be measured. When is this worth the money, the effort and the time of those concerned? When is it good practice and when might it better be skipped? For instance, if you risk spreading an infection just for the sake of measuring a hemoglobin level, it may well be a lot wiser to lower an eyelid to make a less accurate, but also less risky, clinical diagnosis. In the other examples likewise, studying "the body in practice" brings to the fore all kinds of queries, shifts and tensions. In some cases professionals attend to these already, in others they do not. In some cases they are hardly consequential, in others they definitely deserve to be explored in wider (social science and policy) health care discussions. One way or another, the implication for anthropology is that it does not need to content itself with *adding* something to biological and biomedical knowledges and interventions. It may also *study* biological and biomedical knowledges and interventions. That is to say: shed further light on them, question them, criticize them, support them, compare them with one another in unexpected ways, or otherwise interfere with them.

Building on the existing work done along these lines, in this chapter I present two modest, but noteworthy additional examples. They both concern "eating bodies" and more particularly the human body's ability to taste its food and drink. First, I follow "the function of taste" from a particular taste research setting to an equally specific rehabilitation centre. Then I present an example of what research into the "waning of taste" in old age tells us, and compare this with attempts in a provincial Dutch nursing home to provide people with dementia with tasty food and drink. In both instances I use "the clinic" as a counterpoint to "the laboratory" (Canguilhem 1994). This allows me to argue that laboratory research does not get to know *the* body, but rather, bodies interrogated in a laboratory-specific way. In clinical circumstances bodies are being asked different things and, correspondingly, respond differently as well. A first conclusion that may be drawn from this is that different practices enact different versions of "the body," or, stronger, different "bodies." There is a second conclusion as well. This is that while professional care is supposed to *rest upon* scientific facts, when looked at in more detail, it does not appear to "rest" at all. As they seek to improve people's lives, professionals do not "apply" what follows from laboratory facts. Their concern is not with what the body *is* beneath its skin. Instead, they experiment with what *might be made* of the bodies they care for, in practice (Struhkamp 2005).

And then I draw a third conclusion. This follows on from two "sideline" considerations that I will present in addition to my primary analysis. One of these signals that to ask about the *function* of taste is not necessarily a good way to find out about its *relevance*. The second shows that though the eating body's tastes are not uniquely given, but made in various ways, they may still be stubborn. The activism suggested

by a term like "making" should not fool us into dreaming that bodies submit themselves to our will. It makes more sense to attentively analyze their / our embodied desires in the light of the histories, particularities and imponderables linked up with them (Law 2000). But how to go about this? Here, beyond metaphors like "function" and "making," we need other words. My third conclusion, then, is a question. Which is the right language to use in writing ethnographies of eating bodies and their (gradually trained, potentially waning) ability to taste?

## The Function of Taste

Research into the body's ability to physically appreciate its food and drink is highly varied. This is not the place to try to give an overview, let alone an analysis (for that see Mann n.d.). Here, I will consider a single example. When sampling the relevant literatures, one comes across it repeatedly (if in slightly different versions!). It has to do with the *function* of tasting food and drink. Most researchers, inspired by evolutionary theory, link this to the task of living organisms to select what is and isn't good for them to eat. One of the labs in the field has set up a popularizing website to explain this to us. First, it warns that we actually should not be concerned with "taste" but with "flavor." Flavor is defined as more than taste. It is the sum total of what the mouth has tasted and what it has touched (sent on through the trigeminal nerve), plus what the nose has smelled, catching signals through its nostrils as well as in the back of the throat. All this information is transported to the brain. A quote: "Of course, we have to know what we are eating, so taste, smell, and trigeminal messages meet in a part of the brain called the insula, which identifies *what* the flavor is." The site doesn't tell us how the insula accomplishes this task, but it does indicate that this is not a particularly verbal matter. Once identified, the complex sensual impressions that make up flavor are processed again: "But knowing *what* is not enough. We also need to react emotionally to what we are eating – Do we like it? Is it poison? Should we enjoy it or spit it out? Flavor messages go to the emotional centers in the temporal lobe and the cingulate gyrus. Messages from all of these areas then reach the orbitofrontal cortex in the frontal lobe of the brain, right above the eyes. This part of the brain evaluates experience and chooses among alternatives." (http: / / www.tastescience.com / abouttaste2.html, accessed November 18, 2010)

Here, "food choice" is not framed in a rational manner, or even one that is cognitive. It does not follow from "knowing what," but from an emotional response to "flavor." Two possible emotional reactions are laid out for us, one that is positive and one that is negative. If we *like* a flavor, the food that carries it is good and we go on to enjoy it. If we *dislike* a flavor, we risk ingesting poison, and thus we spit out what has just entered our mouth. The website (one accessible example among many others) presents its knowledge as if it were about *the body*. But where are the human bodies that actually have to be careful about avoiding poisonous food to be found? At least in the sanitized countries of the global North (where most of the research is done), hardly anybody ever runs the risk of encountering poisonous food. Supermarkets know better than to put it on their shelves. Restaurants and institutional kitchens have to comply with innumerable rules about "food safety." Thus, few eaters living in Northern (and other sanitized) regions have ever had the occasion to train the ability

to recognize poison so as to spit it out. The implication is that the research into the "function of taste" just mentioned does not investigate "the" human body, but instead a human body of a particular kind. One that is living in circumstances where there is no state regulation and no food inspection. Where fridges are lacking and cooking not obvious. One that should be wary about food safety on a day-to-day basis. It is quite an achievement to model such a figure in a high-tech lab!

A first crucial step in that is to find suitable experimental subjects. And there they are: in most of the research into the *function* of taste (or rather flavor) the role of "the human body" is played by rats. Rats, omnivores like us, turn out to be very astute test-tasters (Birke 2003).

This is not to say that in human societies with a working food inspection regime "taste" does not have a function. It may well have many. Here, I'll present you with an example that I came across in a Dutch rehabilitation centre where taste (as, *pace* the lab, it is locally called) has a function in training people who have problems swallowing their food and drink. Such problems are usually due to a cerebrovascular accident or another neurological impairment. While the brain never really heals, it may adapt and with a lot of training the art of swallowing can often be remastered. The speech therapist who gives the training has allowed me to visit the clinic to learn about her work. One of the rehabilitants she has just been working with, Mr Takens (or that is how I will call him here), has agreed to my ethnographic presence in the consulting room.

"So, there you are, welcome, how are things going?" the therapist asks Mr Takens as he rolls his wheelchair through the door and up to the table. Her voice is cheerful as she is expecting (and encouraging) him to do well. He answers: "Fine, I'm fine. Do you know what I've been eating today? Did the nurses tell you?" Mr Takens does not compare his present condition to, say, that of five months ago, before his brain was damaged. Instead, his point of reference is the day, three months ago, when the speech therapist started to work with him. He seems proud of his achievements. While he shifts his eye contact between her and me, he explains: "Last week the tube was clogged up and the nurses had to take it out. So I said, don't put in a new one. It irritated me, the tube did, and my nose hurt. And I felt pretty sure I could do it. So first they gave me this fluid stuff. It felt strange in my belly, it did, very strange. Different from tube-feed." Changes, the therapist explains, are made gradually (Winance 2006). The ability to swallow is best regained step by step. A slow pace is also better for the bowels, as they need time to adapt to new digestive tasks. Thus, a rehabilitant who starts to eat by himself first gets slightly thickened fluid food, then something more viscous, then finely minced food, and only then food that is roughly minced. That is the stage that Mr Takens has reached now: "It was roughly minced food, today, and I could do it." He smiles. There's progress. He is once more able to control the muscles in his throat well enough to steer even roughly minced food into his esophagus, rather than allowing it to slip into his bronchi.

The therapist will later tell me that the training tends to start out with her encouraging the rehabilitant to swallow his own saliva. She shows me how this works as we visit another person in the rehabilitation centre. This is Mr Zenderen, who is not yet able to sit in a wheelchair, but lies slightly propped up in bed. With her left hand the therapist strokes the old man's throat from the outside, to incite a reflexive reaction. She gives him verbal encouragement as well – "Yes, very good, there you go, yes, Mr Zenderen that's it, and now swallow" – and she demonstratively swallows her own saliva, to show

how it works, hoping that the other person's body will mimic her own. Back in the consulting room she goes on to explain that once a rehabilitant can handle his saliva, he is given "stuff" to swallow. Innocent stuff, that does not harm the lungs if, by accident, it ends up there. "And then, with Mr Takens, last week I asked him what he would like most. What he craved. He said chocolate cake with cherries. But, well, cake was taking things one step too far, so we got him chocolate pudding instead, with a red fruit sauce – they had a red fruit sauce for us in the kitchen. And he worked with that." With Mr Takens present she also mentions the pivotal moment in the training, the moment that Mr Takens moved from swallowing "stuff" to swallowing "real food." "That was something, wasn't it, Mr Takens?" He nods. A great event. Chocolate pudding. Chocolate pudding with sweet, slightly tangy red sauce on top of it.

This is it. Taste has a function in the speech therapist's training. This is not that it allows an eater to differentiate between safe food and food that might be poisonous. Instead, in this particular clinical setting the function of taste is to motivate Mr Takens to swallow. He needs some encouragement, Mr Takens. For swallowing is scary to him: he does not want to have food ending up in his bronchi and then his lungs where it's likely to cause an infection and other possible problems. He is no longer accustomed to swallowing and neither is he sure of himself: he has lost so many abilities that used to be matters of course. He is also not sure if he will like what he gets to taste, even if it is nice, as he has been warned that his brain damage may have interfered with his senses. What if it has? That would be so disappointing. All in all, then, though it is pivotal, this is not an easy moment. But chocolate pudding helps and so does the red fruit sauce. Together they make it worthwhile to try to confront the dangers implied in swallowing. They promise to taste good and that is motivating.

## Sideline: Vitality

At that point, the therapist asks me if I have any questions for Mr Takens. Do I? As a fieldworker, I tend merely to observe things taking their own course with me fading into the background. This means that I have not prepared any questions. But of course I do not want to seem uninterested and, besides, this is an occasion to learn. The first question that comes to mind is one that Rita Struhkamp asked when doing fieldwork in a rehabilitation centre a few years earlier. The scene had stuck with me ever since she described it (I supervised her at the time). When talking with someone paralyzed due to a spinal cord injury, Rita had asked "What do you miss most?" Her informant had answered that, more than her movements, she missed her sensations. She talked about *warmth*. She said that she longed for the comforting sensation of feeling warm when lying in bed at night under good covers (Struhkamp 2005). Against that background I ask Mr Takens: "What did you miss most when you were unable to swallow your food?" Mr Takens doesn't hesitate. "The taste. I missed tasting. Not this or that taste, but just tasting something, anything at all."

In the rehabilitation centre the physicalities of eating are decomposed. Even if you are unable to swallow, you can still be provided with nutrients, thanks to a special tube inserted through your nose and gently pushed down to your stomach. Thus, this technique physically separates out the nutritious qualities of food from its taste. A person in rehabilitation may still like or dislike the "belly feel" of the food s/he is being fed through the tube, but s/he cannot appreciate its taste. The tube, along with

skilled professionals, specialized feed, and generous insurance money, have allowed Mr Takens to survive despite his brain injury. So he does not complain. But when I ask about it, he does admit that he missed tasting when he had a tube. He did not miss this or that taste, but, or so he tries to convey to me, the outsider who wants to learn, the very experience of tasting. At some point the nurses had given him a small sponge, so that he might wet his mouth if it got too dry. This sponge was dipped in water that tasted slightly of lemon. It was not a particularly great taste, he says, but it was wonderful compared with tasting nothing at all. For that is … boring is not quite the word for it: it is more than boring.

Thus, while even in societies where poisonous food is scarce, taste can be *made* to have a function, it is not necessarily *functional*. How to put this? A word like "function" calls up the image of a machine that either works or (partially) fails. But when Mr Takens talks about having missed tasting his food and drink, he does not mention failure. Nothing went wrong due to this particular deficit, nothing broke down. However, in his "lived experience" being unable to taste eroded his feelings of well-being, or, stronger still, his sense of being alive. "More than boring" indicates emptiness, a void. Thus, rather than a functionalist repertoire, Mr Takens evokes one that is vitalist (Greco 2005). No mechanics, here, but sensuality. Not so much "labor" as "pleasure" – or a lack thereof. The experience is not one of a body-part failing, but of a body partially dying (Varela 2001). They form a stark contrast, these two languages for theorizing and talking about the body: functionalism, with its "working," and vitalism, with its "thriving." And yet they do not *just* contrast. For one might well say that it is only because the pleasure of taste is "vital" to many people (including Mr Takens), that taste can be made to have "a function" in the rehabilitation centre's treatment at all (Mol and Law 2004).

## The Waning of Taste

If biological research into bodily senses brings in the age factor, more often than not old people appear to be less sensitive than those who are young. The ability to taste – or to appreciate flavor – is no exception. Indeed it is an obvious case in point. Or, to quote a taste researcher's concise enunciation: "The ability to smell and taste breaks down with age, diminishing quality of life and impeding good nutrition" (Davenport 2004). In a research context a fact like this calls for an explanation. How does it come about? "Researchers are gaining a clearer view of *how* aging takes a toll on the senses of smell and taste." With an answer to the "how" question, comes the promise of a better future: "and they are hoping to find ways to revive them" (Davenport 2004). Finding a cause might lead to a remedy. If, for instance, a person is less able to taste and smell due to zinc deficiency, zinc tablets may work wonders. "Pathological alterations of decreased taste sensation (hypogeusia) have [also] been associated with iron deficiency, oral candidiasis, xerostomia, and depression" (Morley 2001: 82). It is possible to supplement iron, to fight the overgrowth of Candida (a fungus) in the mouth, to counter xerostomia (a dry mouth) with well adapted fluids, and, who knows, to modulate depression (no, I don't evoke anti-depressants here, but activation, attention, movement, singing). But what if a person's ability to taste wanes due to *dementia*? In people with dementia it is unlikely that a loss of the ability to taste can be countered

separately from the other the symptoms of the disease, for (I quote again): "this is a neurological phenomenon and not due to nasal disease [and / or taste bud problems] in the Alzheimer's population" (Murphy and Davidson 1992). The waning of the ability to taste in dementia, one might say, is an irrefutable neurological fact.

And no, I don't seek to refute it – not in neurology. But what to make of this fact in nursing home practice? Maybe in the future (if enough is invested in this quest) researchers will craft an intervention that helps to counter, or prevent the onset of, dementia – or so they keep on promising (Moreira and Palladino 2005). But what until then? Should present day psychogeriatric nursing homes just try to provide their residents with nutrients, while taking for granted that demented people get little pleasure from their food and drink? In nursing home practice this is not what happens. There, the waning of the body's ability to taste and smell is not accepted as a *fact*, but points to a *task*. Compare this to what happens in professional care for people with diabetes. Laboratory research shows that bodies need insulin to survive. However, clinicians do not tell patients whose bodies no longer produce insulin that they will shortly die, instead they teach them to inject factory-made insulin from the outside (Mol 2008). In dementia care an equivalent to insulin injections is lacking – existing drugs work poorly and in only a small percentage of the target population. And yet something similar goes on. While biomedical research delves into the 'physiological' pathways of "the body with Alzheimer's Disease," care practices mobilize all kinds of materials to improve demented people's daily lives (Moser 2008). In care practice, what counts for most is not what inevitably happens to "the body," but what, with some effort and creativity, "these bodies here and now" can be made to experience in real life.

In nursing home practice, then, the question is how (even if people's perceptive abilities may be waning) to still organize pleasure in eating and drinking. There are many ways of doing this and I'll present you with a few that I encountered in a provincial Dutch nursing home, that here I call "Home Blue." A first way of granting people pleasure is to adapt the food and drink that they are being offered to their preferences. This, again, may be done in various ways. As I observe Stella, one of the food assistants of Home Blue, she tells me: "You see, these are the old note cards. When people are admitted, we mark what they like to eat on these cards. Here's Mrs Grave's card. Look, for her breakfast she likes bread with chocolate sprinkles." By the time I do my fieldwork, the cards are called "old" because a new way of attuning to people's preferences has been introduced in Home Blue. Rather than marking down "chocolate sprinkles" on one person's card and, say, "strawberry jam" on that of another, both the chocolate sprinkles and the strawberry jam are set out on a shared breakfast table, together with buttered slices of bread. This allows residents to have fresh preferences every morning. Not everybody is convinced. Stella again: "It is of course good that there is choice now. But, you see, some people don't like it. If I say, 'Good morning, Mrs Grave, what do you want on your bread today?' she says: 'You still don't know that? I always have chocolate sprinkles.' She looks as if I badly mistreat her." The task of adapting food and drink to people's preferences is not necessarily easy – certainly not in a nursing home. Asking questions is not always the way to go – good carers seek additional ways of attuning to people's appreciations (Pols 2005). But one way or another: the art of care is to offer residents food and drink that they positively appreciate. Food and drink that they *like*.

Adapting food and drink to people's preferences is not just an individual matter – chocolate sprinkles here, strawberry jam there. There is a collective element as well. The cook catering for Home Blue (as well as for another house and a meals-on-wheels service) boils his vegetables a lot longer for his elderly eaters than he would do for his family and friends at home. "If I were to cook the beans in such a way that they still have a bite, that they are somewhat crisp, I would get at least 20 phone calls with complaints. My eaters want their beans soft. If you cook for old people you know that. You simply have to adapt to their taste." But of course "old people" is not a coherent collective. There are more group-tastes to take into account. For instance: while many inhabitants of Home Blue are okay with soft boiled beans, some prefer spicy *bami goreng*. In Home Blue Mrs Klerks is quite often served with this or other Indonesian dishes. On the days that she is, she eats a lot more than when she is served with "ordinary" Dutch food. Therefore the cooks make a few extra dishes every time they cook Indonesian food and put them in the freezer for the sake of the small group of residents with roots in the former Dutch "East Indies" colonies (Mol 2010).

Taste is not just in the food. The surroundings in which people eat also affect how they appreciate it. Thus, in Home Blue the tables are set with colorful placemats. The lighting is bright but not harsh. It is relatively quiet because people (residents, care professionals, family) are not allowed to dash in and out of the room while dinner is being served. There have been experiments with classical music, but though this is sometimes much appreciated, it didn't work in Home Blue. That surroundings may alter taste implies that a lot of effort goes into trying to make the nursing home ward, however extraordinary, still seem "just like home" (Mol n.d.). However, some residents, those who are still "good enough," like their food better if the surroundings do not evoke home, but a festive occasion. One afternoon, Mrs Jonker is fetched by her daughter. The daughter: "We go to the lunchroom. She did that with me when I was a kid." The coziness of the lunchroom, the memories of "special occasions" that may still linger there, the bustling life in the street that you can see while sitting in the calm at the window, her daughter quietly chatting: Mrs Jonker enjoys all of this enormously. It definitely improves the taste of apple pie and milky coffee (Taylor 2008).

The taste of food and drink does not only alter with surroundings, but also with the efforts that carers put into serving or feeding those who are eating. As Melanie (a care assistant) is feeding Mr Tomlow, she puts her free hand on his arm. She says: "Here's another bite for you, Mr Tomlow, there you go." And then she adds: "Is it good?" or, alternatively, "Do you like it?" She doesn't ask these questions to learn something about either the food or Mr Tomlow. Instead, they are meant to have performative effects. Melanie tries to *make* Mr Tomlow's food taste good – even if it is minced. The kitchen has the habit of mincing up beans, potatoes and meatballs together. My informants in Home Blue deplore this (in some other homes dishes are minced separately). But still Melanie says: "There you go, Mr Tomlow, very good. Now that is nice, isn't it? Yes, here's another bite for you." If, in a few weeks or months from now, Mr Tomlow closes his mouth when he is offered a spoonful, if Melanie can no longer make him like his food, then the carers will start experimenting. "A while ago," says Stella, "we had this man, he was very old, he didn't want to eat. And then we tried this, that and the other and found out he liked pancakes. So we gave him pancakes, morning, noon and night, until he no longer wanted those either. We tried other stuff, but no, nothing. He wanted nothing. And then, after a few days, he died."

In other people banana-flavored yoghurt goes a long way; or food and drink tasting of chocolate (Harbers et al. 2002).

In the nursing home neurological facts about the ability of demented people to taste and smell are not disputed. But they are not taken for granted either. Instead, nurses, care assistants, food assistants, cooks, daughters and everyone else try to *make* the residents' food and drink taste good. They actively seek to organize pleasure. They cannot alter how well their residents would perform if they were tested within the confines of a laboratory. But they can organize their nursing home wards in ways that differ from a laboratory. They can make them more pleasant, more generative of pleasure. Thus, the nursing home provides us with an interesting lesson about eating bodies. Put to different tests – those of the research lab or those of the ward – eating bodies respond in different ways. The lab finds that taste declines for all people with dementia, but in the clinic most residents are still able to enjoy their food and drink. Mrs Grave is pleased when Stella offers her bread with chocolate sprinkles for breakfast, she even says "Thank you!" Mrs Jonker's face glows when her daughter treats her to milky coffee and apple pie in the lunchroom, the daughter tells me. Without looking up for a moment, Mrs Klerks devours her tasty bami goreng. And even though Mr Tomlow doesn't quite nod when Melanie asks if his food is good, he still opens his mouth for another spoonful.

## Sideline: Disgust

Neither the eaters' ability to taste, nor the taste of the food, are fixed properties. Thus, with sufficient attentive care, by creative tinkering, pleasure in food can often be brought into being. And yet there are limits to this adaptability. At some point, demented people close their mouth. They turn their head away when a spoon is approaching. And while cozy surroundings and nice talk go a long way, the food itself is still important, too. In Home Blue the care professionals, or so they tell me during their coffee break, are not convinced that the taste of the food the kitchen provides them with, is as good as it might be. They call upon me as a witness. "We'll be serving lunch soon," says Lisa, "go ahead, taste some for yourself." This is an interesting moment. So far, in my fieldwork into various clinical practices related to eating and drinking, I have watched and listened attentively. I have even smelled – as I entered Home Blue, I smelled to my relief that it was not saturated with cooking smells (Martin 2002). The carers later tell me they deplore this, as such smells tend to increase people's appetite. Of course! How stupid of me to appreciate the absence of cooking smells, just because I happen to dislike them. Cooking smells improve appetite. Now for tasting. I have not yet used my own ability to taste as a method. I would like to do so. A good ethnographer uses all her senses (Stoler 1997).

However, the very moment that Lisa invites me to taste today's lunch, I realize I can't. I don't know how I would perform in the lab, but I do know that when it comes to the nursing home's lunch my "ability to taste" is far worse than that of most the residents. My body is not used to overcooked beans, fluffy potatoes with gravy and indeterminate meatballs. I would like to taste them, and can tell myself that I should, but my *disgust* is stronger than my adaptability. Thus, I fail Lisa (she would have liked me to confirm her judgment) and I fail my duties as an all round "sensuous ethnographer." After years of eating the kind of vegetarian fare that counts as good

food in my particular subculture, my "ability to taste" is not up to this particular test. When it is time for my lunch I will have the salad with red beans, apple, fennel and walnuts that I brought from home. The previous night I may have had, say, an oven dish of eggplant, tomatoes, hot pepper and coriander; brown rice and goat cheese on the side. Shifting from such meals to "ordinary Dutch food" from one day to the next is beyond me. Who knows, with time and effort it might be possible for me to acquire "a taste" for the food offered in the nursing home. No longer eating at home and going in hungrily for weeks on end might help. But rather than experimenting with this, I accept my failure. This, I admit, puts a serious limit to my immersion in the field as a "tasting body." But it at least fits with the nursing home's tolerance of loss, lack and inabilities. Why be unduly heroic (Diedrich 2005)?

The lesson? Bodily pleasure never comes effortlessly, for anyone (Gomart and Hennion 1999) and with some effort it may be brought into being in a nursing home environment just like anywhere else. With sufficient care, people with dementia can be made to enjoy their food and drink. However, at some point such "constructive efforts" hit their limits (Van de Port 2004). In my story, these limits become apparent in the body of the field worker and her physical disgust of overcooked beans, fluffy potatoes and, especially, gravy and meat balls. Whatever I might have *wanted*, I simply *couldn't* eat the lunch of the locals. But residents, too, are sometimes put out by the food they are being offered. They just cannot eat it. They spit it out. They yell. They look disgusted. They shut their mouth. It is not easy to predict where exactly a body's limits will be: limits are not given before they are tested. Thus, for instance, not everybody used to eating vegetarian food dislikes a meaty transgression. Or it may be that disgust (along with taste and smell) is waning in dementia, too. Dieke Martini tells of Mrs Peters, a vegetarian resident whom she came across in her field work on the psychogeriatric ward of another Dutch nursing home (Martini 2010). Accidently, a new care assistant had not served Mrs Peters with her own special vegetarian "diet," but with an "ordinary" plate of mashed potatoes, peas and chicken. As Dieke approached, Mrs Peters was eating the chicken. "Nice," she said, looking up with broad smile, "very tasty."

## Conclusion

Bodies-in-practice differ from one site to the next. In the examples that I have presented here it appears that bodily abilities in laboratories differ from bodily abilities in clinics. I have concentrated particularly on the ability to taste. In the research laboratory this ability may come out as something with a specific function: it helps to avoid ingesting poison. In the rehabilitation centre, by contrast, the ability to taste has a different function. There, it is used to boost the motivation of rehabilitation patients who have to try swallowing again after weeks, or months, of being tube-fed. If it is being tested in a research laboratory, the body's ability to taste is seriously lower in people with dementia than in a control group. However, this doesn't necessarily mean that in their daily lives people with dementia are less able than others to enjoy their food and drink. It all depends. It depends on a list of things, and nursing homes may attend to these, if they seek to give good care. If caregivers creatively experiment with how to make residents enjoy their food and drink, then joy may well be possible.

All too often, physical functions and abilities are presented as given with "the body." The suggestion is that they reside under the skin – or behind the lips, in the nostrils, and, of course, inside the brain. Here, I have drawn another image, one in which "functions" and "abilities" are brought into being, in one form or another, in this, that, or the other practice. As a sideline to this argument, I have put in two caveats. While it makes sense to speak of the "function" of the ability to taste both in the research lab and the swallowing-training in the rehabilitation centre, for an eater the ability to taste is not specifically linked to its "function." Taste rather affords eaters a sense of vitality. It feeds into the pleasure of being alive. And while in many ways it is possible to *make* people enjoy their food and drink, this construction metaphor should not hide that the body's flexibility is just not endless. It is not the case that anything can be "made" if only enough willpower is invested the making. For instance, once a body has, over the course of many years, acquired "a taste," it may no longer be all that flexible. Rather than obliging when asked to try something else, it may stubbornly stick to its fancies. Pleasure is hard to control. Disgust is not something that is easily wished away.

But, or so I would like to end up asking, how to best *verbalize* the simultaneous adaptability and obduracy of bodies in practice? How to talk about the surprises they yield as well as the resistances they put up? Which language to use – or allow ourselves to be used by – if we talk eating, devouring, bellies, appreciation, desire, disgust? Putting things into words is never easy (Hirschauer 2006). But "the ability to taste" seems a particularly tough case. Knowing about "flavor," or so the laboratory website tells us, is hardly verbal. In the lab it isn't. But subtly and compellingly expressing and evoking bodily taste is also difficult in writing anthropology.

## Acknowledgments

Thanks to my various informants in the rehabilitation centre and the nursing home, for whom in this chapter I use fictitious names. Thanks, too, to Jeannette Pols, Rita Struhkamp, Dieke Martini and Anna Mann for their work on care, bodies and / or taste in practice, and for our conversations about it. For further intellectual encouragement I thank Amâde M'charek, Mieke Aerts and John Law. Finally I would like to acknowledge the ERC Advanced Grant that allows me to work on "Eating and the body in Western practice and theory."

## REFERENCES

Akrich, Madeleine and Bernike Pasveer, 2000 Multiplying Obstetrics: Techniques of Surveillance and Forms of Coordination. Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics 21: 63–83.

Birke, Linda, 2003 Who – or What – Are the Rats (and Mice) in the Laboratory? Society and Animals 11(3): 207–224.

Canguilhem, George, 1994 A Vital Rationalist. New York: Zone Books.

Davenport, R. John, 2004 The Flavor of Aging. Science of Aging Knowledge Environment 12: ns1.

Despret, Vinciane, 2004 The Body We Care For: Figures of Anthropo-Zoo-Genesis. Body and Society 10(2–3): 111–134.

Diedrich, Lisa, 2005 A Bioethics of Failure. Anti-Heroic Cancer Narratives. *In* Ethics of the Body: Postconventional Challenges. Margrit Shildrick and Roxanne Mykitiuk, eds. pp. 135–154. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Farquhar, Judith, 2002 Appetites: Food and Sex in Post-Socialist China. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Gomart, Emily and Antoine Hennion, 1999 A Sociology of Attachment: Music Amateurs, Drug Users. *In* Actor Network Theory and After. John Law and John Hassard, eds. pp. 220–247. Oxford: Blackwell.

Greco, Monica, 2005 On the Vitality of Vitalism. Theory, Culture and Society 22(1): 15–27.

Harbers, Hans, Annemarie Mol and Alice Stollmeijer, 2002 Food Matters. Arguments for an Ethnography of Daily Care. Theory, Culture and Society 19(5/6): 207–226.

Hirschauer, Stefan, 2006 Putting Things into Words. Ethnographic Description and the Silence of the Social. Human Studies 29(4): 413–441.

Holtzman, Jon, 2009 Uncertain Tastes: Memory, Ambivalence, and the Politics of Eating in Samburu, Northern Kenya. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Law, John, 2000 On the Subject of the Object: Narrative, Technology, and Interpellation. Configurations 8(1): 1–29.

Lettinga, Ant and Annemarie Mol, 1999 Clinical Specificity and the Non-generalities of Science. On Innovation Strategies for Neurological Physical Therapy. Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics 1999: 517–535.

Mann, Anna, n.d. Taste in the Laboratory.

Martin, Patricia Y., 2002 Sensations, Bodies and the "Spirit of a Place": Aesthetics in Residential Organizations for the Elderly. Human Relations 55: 861–885.

Martini, Dieke, 2010 Met aandacht. Over dementie en eten in de praktijk van de ouderenzorg [Attentive. On Dementia and Eating in Care Institutions for the Elderly]. MA Thesis Medical Anthropology and Sociology, University of Amsterdam.

Mintz, Sidney, 1996 Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Culture and the Past. Boston: Beacon Press.

Mol, Annemarie, 1999 Ontological Politics. A Word and Some Questions. *In* Actor Network Theory and After. John Law and John Hassard, eds. pp. 74–89. Oxford: Blackwell.

Mol, Annemarie, 2002 Cutting Surgeons, Walking Patients. Some Complexities Involved in Comparing. *In* Complexities. John Law and Annemarie Mol, eds. pp. 218–257. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Mol, Annemarie, 2008 The Logic of Care. Health and the Problem of Patient Choice. London: Routledge.

Mol, Annemarie, 2010 Care and its Values. Good Food in the Nursing Home. *In* Care in Practice. On Tinkering in Clinics, Homes and Farms. A. Mol, I. Moser and J. Pols, eds. pp. 7–27. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.

Mol, Annemarie, n.d. Bami Goreng for Mrs. Klerks and Other Stories on Food and Culture. *In* Mélanges: for Michel Callon. Madeleine Akrich, Yannick Barthe, Fabian Muniesa, and Philip Mustar, eds.

Mol, Annemarie and John Law, 2004 Embodied Action, Enacted Bodies. The Example of Hypoglycaemia. Body and Society 10: 43–62.

Moreira, Tiago, 2006 Heterogeneity and Coordination of Blood Pressure in Neurosurgery. Social Studies of Science 36(1): 69–97.

Moreira, Tiago, and Paulo Palladino, 2005 Between Truth and Hope: on Parkinson's Disease, Neurotransplantation and the Production of the Self. History of the Human Sciences 18(3): 55–82.

Morley, John E., 2001 Decreased Food Intake With Aging. The Journal of Gerontology Series A 56(2): 81–88.

Moser, Ingunn, 2008 Making Alzheimer's Disease Matter: Enacting, Interfering, Doing Politics of Nature. Geoforum 39(1): 98–110.

Murphy, Claire and Terence Davidson, 1992 Geriatric Issues: Special Considerations. Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation 7(1): 76–82.

Pols, Jeannette, 2005 Enacting Appreciations: Beyond the Patient Perspective. Health Care Analysis 13(3): 203–221.

Pols, Jeannette, 2010 What Patients Care for with Telecare. *In* Care in Practice. On Tinkering in Clinics, Homes and Farms. Annemarie Mol, Ingunn Moser and Jeannette Pols, eds. pp. 171–194. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.

Stoler, Paul, 1997 Sensuous Scholarship. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Struhkamp, Rita, 2005 Wordless Pain. Dealing with Suffering in Physical Rehabilitation. Cultural Studies 19(6): 701–718.

Struhkamp, Rita, Annemarie Mol and Tsjalling Swierstra, 2009 Dealing with Independence: Doctoring in Physical Rehabilitation Practice. Science, Technology and Human Values 34: 55–76.

Taylor, Janelle, 2008 On Recognition, Caring and Dementia. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 22(4): 313–335.

Van de Port, Mattijs, 2004 Registers of Incontestability. The Quest for Authenticity in Academia and Beyond. Etnofoor 17(1/2): 1–24.

Varela, François, 2001 Intimate Distances: Fragments for a Phenomenology of Organ Transplantation. Journal of Consciousness Studies 8: 5–7.

Winance, Myriam, 2006 Trying Out the Wheelchair. The Mutual Shaping of People and Devices through Adjustment. Science, Technology and Human Values 31(1): 52–72.

CHAPTER 28

# TRANS-NATIONALISM

## *Bodies-in-Motion: Experiences of Momentum in Transnational Surgery*

*Emily McDonald*

1. *broadly:* a property of a moving body that determines the length of time required to bring it to rest when under the action of a constant force or moment
2. strength or force gained by motion or through the development of events

(Definition of "Momentum," Merriam-Webster's Dictionary)

If studies of the body and embodiment are now central to anthropology as a result of the turn to Foucauldian, phenomenological, and feminist approaches (Bordo 1993; Butler 1993; Csordas 1994, 1997; Foucault 1977, 1978; Foucault and Gordon 1980; Grosz 1994; Martin 1987; Turner 1984) the explicit focus on the relationship between bodies and movement has entered into anthropological theory in more problematic ways.[1] The majority of "moving bodies" are now analytically apprehended as they circulate through geographic space, or alternatively, as studies of "body motion" that aim to reveal signifying gestures and bodily techniques. Despite the valuable insights of both of these approaches, little is revealed about the embodied experiences of movement itself.

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

One common thread across diverse studies of "moving bodies," for example, is the foregrounding of bodies physically traversing large stretches of space, including analyses of migration (Sassen 1998), diaspora (Clifford 1997; Gilroy 1991, 1993), displacement (Holtzman 2000; Malkki 1995), and tourism (Bruner 2005; Desmond 2002; Smith 1989), alongside work on transnationalism more generally, including the circulation of bodies and their parts within circuits of labor, citizenship, media, and capital (Appadurai 1996; Basch et al. 1994; Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Ong 1999; Ong and Collier 2005; Scheper-Hughes 2000, 2001; Tsing 2005). These studies provide critical insights into changing patterns of movement at multiple scales, and add to our knowledge of the complex ways in which subjectivity and everyday practices are restructured through various forms of rupture, exchange, and embeddedness. Yet, precisely because of the importance of contextualizing such movement within larger historical, economic, and political processes, accounts of shifting modes of embodiment – or how movement itself might constitute a particular way of "being-in-the-world" (Heidegger and Stambaugh 1996) – have been rare.

In addition to studies of "moving bodies," the explicit focus on "body motion" has long existed within anthropology (see Marcel Mauss's *Techniques of the Body* (1973)) and has included such areas of inquiry as the study of body motion as part of physical labor (Keller and Keller 1996), sports (Brownell 1995; Dyck and Archetti 2003), and dance (Birdwhistell 1985; Williams 1997) among others. Unlike studies of moving bodies that forgo embodied experience in order to reveal the patterns and effects of collective circulation, many studies of body motion too closely treat the motion of material bodies as signifying acts. In collapsing motion with meaning, gesture with semiotics, and rendering such movement more "meaningful," studies of body motion remain uncomfortably lodged within existing notions of the liberal individual subject.

One of the clearest examples of this approach is that of Brenda Farnell (1994, 1999, 2000), who argues that despite widespread interest in the body, anthropologists have yet to come to terms with humans as "moving agents" (Farnell 1994: 931). While Farnell usefully points to the ways in which human bodies have too often been treated as static entities when approached as cultural constructs and social texts, her effort to recuperate the moving body faces equally difficult theoretical limitations.

Farnell's goal is to understand social actors as "enacting the body," which she defines as "using physical actions in the *agentive production of meaning*; actions that may be either out of awareness through habit, or highly deliberate choreographies" (Farnell 1994: 931, emphasis mine). Although drawing on Bourdieu's theoretical innovations, which include an analysis of conscious bodily practices as well as the "practical mastery" of everyday tasks through the gestures, postures and stances that make up a body *hexis* (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), Farnell argues that a problematic dualism remains between thought / language and bodily praxis (Farnell 2000). She additionally critiques phenomenological approaches grounded in the subjective experience of the lived body, arguing that such approaches do not account for causation, agency or a "genuine conception of the person" (Farnell 1994: 932). Yet, Farnell's attempt to account for agency problematically conflates body movement with the agentive production of meaning, reconstituting the normative subject through the analysis of individual, material bodies.

Within anthropology, poststructuralist critiques such as those developed by Michel Foucault (1977, 1978; Foucault and Gordon 1980), Judith Butler (1990, 1993) and more recently, Saba Mahmood (2001, 2005) have pointed to the dangers of reproducing the normative subject as part of our research. In line with these theoretical shifts, individuals are often understood as subjects who discipline and alter their thoughts, bodies, actions, conduct, and ways of being within historically particular discourses, with increased anthropological attention to the relationship between power and subject formation (Foucault 1997; Mahmood 2005: 211).

Yet, if we have moved away from notions of the transcendent subject, this effort is at least partially undone by current approaches to understanding the relationship between bodies and motion, many of which still clearly rely on understanding movement as the agentive production of meaning, or, alternatively, within the techniques of subject formation enacted by individual bodies. Even nuanced approaches such as Mahmood's reconceptualization of agency as part of the cultivation of Islamic piety focus on the body in relation to the creation of the self, as she interprets bodily acts, gestures and habituated postures as a means of "being and becoming a certain kind of person" (Mahmood 2005: 215). Fundamental aspects of being and moving in the world, however, remain unexamined through such approaches. In my own work, individual "agents" as such are often difficult to locate, and rather than enacting motion, they are also caught up and enacted *by* motion, both generating and being moved within forces of momentum clearly in excess of any single body, object, or subject.

Broadly, I suggest that our understanding of the relationship between bodies and movement would be helpfully reconceived within the context of transnational medical travel I observed during fifteen months of fieldwork in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Departing from the two approaches outlined above, I focus on the perceptual experiences of "bodies-in-momentum" to account for the spatial and temporal displacements many transnational patients experience as part of undergoing surgery thousands of miles from home. Drawing on phenomenological theories of embodiment, I question the utility of anthropological approaches to movement and motion that overlook the embodied experiences of movement itself. I propose instead that, in attending to experiences such as momentum, anthropologists are better equipped to account for non-congruous temporal and spatial orientations to, and ways of being in, the world (Merleau-Ponty 1962; Miyazaki 2007). Such an approach allows us to capture perceptual experiences of movement and modes of embodiment, while reading such experiences onto analyses of the larger socio-economic contexts on which scholars of transnationalism tend to focus. Additionally, within an expanded awareness of how bodies move through, and are moved by, multiple subjects, spaces, objects, and temporalities, concepts such as momentum may enable us to more effectively grasp the excesses of action, intention, and practice revealed in the wake of the decentered subject.

## Transnational Surgery as Momentum

While accompanying transnational patients during their daily activities in Buenos Aires, it became clear that undergoing cosmetic surgery abroad presents patients with obstacles that they would not encounter if seeking treatments closer to home. Most critically are the significant limitations to what is knowable and imaginable for patients

prior to arrival in Argentina, making the "choice" to have surgery one that is nearly impossible to enact from a distance. Within this landscape of imperfect knowledge, transnational patients often defer any clear moment of choice regarding surgery, and instead, embody a stance I characterize as "waiting-and-seeing." While patients may suspend any decisive *moment,* they nevertheless initiate and surrender to a decisive *momentum* − that is, they engage in momentum-generating activities such as meeting and forming friendships with people connected to the medical tourism industry, embarking on international travel and purchasing the material objects needed for surgery – often before meeting with the doctor in person.

This distinctly non-sequential ordering of activities (e.g. buying a post-surgical garment before finalizing surgical options) is particular to the complex ways in which time and distance must be managed in order to successfully operate upon transnational patients. Doctors and other medical tourism specialists must structure the timing of such visits as to allow for a maximum period of recovery and follow-up care in order to enable patients to heal "enough" before journeying thousands of miles back home. As a result, opportunities to plan and discuss the surgery itself often come only after other, more immediate, details are undertaken. And yet, it is the momentum inherent to these seemingly mundane details that immerse patients within increasingly complex webs of social obligation, and lead them to cultivate relationships with people and material objects that lend themselves to a surgical outcome.

## The Emergence of "Medical Tourism," Biomedicine and Movement

In order to explore the momentum central to transnational medical travel, I first need to further contextualize the newly emerging patterns of medical tourism that serve as a departure point of my research. While voyaging across borders in order to seek health and healing has long existed under a wide variety of circumstances (Urry 2002) with the turn of the 21st century came the formalization of global biomedical services on a much larger scale – fully wrapped within the new vernacular of the nascent "medical tourism" industry.

Academics soon caught wind of the shifting terrain of medical travel. The term "medical tourism" first appeared cautiously and uncelebrated within health care, bioethics and legal journals (Bishop and Litch 2000; Turner 2007; York 2008), spreading with more exuberance among economists, policy analysts and tourism industry experts, who were quick to translate such travel into the potential of "savings," and other corporate-oriented euphemisms for profit (Bookman and Bookman 2007; Connell 2006; Horowitz and Rosensweig 2007; Mattoo and Rathindran 2006). Soon thereafter, medical tourism made its way further into circles of academia, including among anthropologists and other social scientists, who rightly pointed out the usefulness of understanding medical tourism as a social practice open to ethnographic investigation (Inhorn and Patrizio 2009; Mazzaschi and McDonald 2011; Scheper-Hughes 2002; Sobo 2009; Whittaker 2008, 2009; see also the forthcoming theme issue of *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* on medical tourism (volume 29 part 3)).

Throughout my analysis, I generally favor the term "transnational medical travel" over the depoliticized term "medical tourism," choosing to move away from the

valence of "leisure" and instead mark such travel as a political process embedded within specific historical and economic contexts. I have elected, however, to continue to refer to "medical tourism" and the "medical tourism industry" to signal the ways in which such travel is often marketed in precisely this depoliticized language.

The language of corporate medical tourism, including that of the U.S.-based Medical Tourism Association, encourages us to consider the world as a blank slate in which patients-turned-savvy-consumers physically circulate their bodies within an international free market, shopping for standardized healthcare at reduced prices. In practice, however, transnational patients cannot be understood merely as hypermobile consumers-in-motion, but as politically and socially embedded beings seeking out ways to alter, transform and intervene upon their physical bodies. A series of complex dynamics inform patients' travel, including state organization and distribution of health care, moral and legal injunctions shaping access to biomedical technologies, as well as ever-shifting definitions of "necessary" and "elective" body modification, in which a growing awareness and anticipation of "cutting edge" biomedicine precedes the reality of care. Instead of entering into a uniform global market in health care, transnational patients consider destinations based on a highly particular calculus of affordability, accessibility, personal connections and "gut feelings," all of which are, in turn, shaped by long-standing conventions that divide the world between places deemed "safe" and "sterile" and those that are "contaminated" and "risky" (Bashford 2006).

Dividing the world into categories of cleanliness and contamination is not a new practice, of course, but one that can be traced back at least as far as colonial-era ideologies conflating whiteness with hygiene and civilization, and the global south with disease and death (Bashford 2004; Macleod and Lewis 1988). In this light, more than claims to novel forms of "cost savings," the medical tourism industry's most radical – if unintended – innovation is the discursive recoding of vast regions of the globe long understood as a "white man's grave" (Anderson 2006: 212) as desirable destinations for high-tech medical procedures. Yet, such language remains slippery. It is precisely the very affordability of overseas health care – the "cost differential" that is the *raison d'être* of the medical tourism industry – that simultaneously renders such travel both highly rational and deeply suspect. That is, in so much as surgery is "cheaper" when undertaken overseas, such surgeries remain caught in the doubled connation of desirably affordable yet of suspicious quality. That the market logic of "cost savings" alone remains insufficient to convince patients to travel abroad is symptomatically conveyed through marketing discourses that belabor doctor's expertise and quality. In Buenos Aires, claims to biomedical expertise additionally come wrapped within claims of the city being a "European" and "white" alternative to other "tropical" medical tourism destinations. Put another way, despite an entire industry premised on the erasure of difference enabled by the unrestricted mobility of moving bodies, the exchanges of "medical tourism" remain firmly entrenched within the systematic linking of biomedical authority and race.

## SURGERY IN THE "PARIS OF SOUTH AMERICA"

Within the Buenos Aires-based medical tourism industry, marketing tropes consistently point to two major factors that set the city apart from other destinations: the

country's status as a "white" or "European" destination (with its implications for the kind of biomedical care available), and the recent 2000 / 2001 economic crisis. As part of my larger project, I have discussed the complex historical processes that position Buenos Aires as a destination for transnational medicine, as well as the ways in which locally meaningful political and ideological endeavors are enacted through the biomedical treatment of foreign bodies. Here, however, I want to point to a few key pieces of this larger socio-economic context in order to reveal some of the particular ways patients come to imagine Buenos Aires as a desirable destination for surgery, as well as more fully situate their experiences of momentum.

The idea of European heritage has long served as a central feature of Argentine national identity, especially among *porteños* (residents of Buenos Aires). Such claims are rooted in a national narrative that can be traced to the architects of Argentina, who attempted to consolidate the expansive territory into a newly formed nation through explicit efforts to attract Anglo-Saxon immigrants from Europe in the late 19th century (Moya 2006). As part of the booming economy of turn-of-the-century Argentina, the project of importing "modernity" remained distinctly European even after the largest waves of European immigration ebbed (Guano 2004). Ruling class porteños of the time reinforced their modern status through the conspicuous consumption of European culture and goods, even commissioning French and Italian architects to design the extravagant mansions and public buildings that would come to define the city as the "Paris of South America" (Guano 2002: 183). The importation of European scientific models furthered the project of producing the city as a modern space. As Julia Rodriguez (2006) explains, members of Argentina's new ruling class practiced a "near worship of French culture," adopting, in particular, Auguste Comte's belief in "scientific principles as a 'sure fix' to the monumental 'backwardness' of their country" (Rodriguez 2006: 33).

More recently, scholars have argued that the national rhetoric of an Argentine nation founded through immigration is problematic, not only that it obscures the contributions of non-European groups, but also in that it elides the fact that the majority of immigrants arrived from what were considered racially suspect regions of Europe, including Italy and Spain (Grimson and Kessler 2005). It remains a powerful national narrative nonetheless, and it was common for the people I worked with to explain to me, for example, that Argentines are "descendents of boats," and to tell me of parents or grandparents born in Italy, Germany or parts of Eastern Europe. European heritage and white racial identity remain central to many porteños' understanding of their own place within the larger world, as well as Argentina's exceptional status within Latin America, and affinity with the United States and Europe.

And yet, if Argentina's claims to modernity were historically anchored through a tripartite assertion of European stock, economic prosperity and scientific expertise, such claims became tenuous with increasing economic instability in the 20th century. While a century's worth of complex economic and political shifts cannot be adequately addressed here, scholars have shown that various moments of economic downturn and political instability coincided with renewed popular concern about Argentina's racial composition (Grimson and Kessler 2005; Joseph 2000). Porteño elite, in particular, turned to biomedical tropes to articulate racial conflict as a threat to modernity, and positioned science and medicine at the center of the project of curing the body politic (Brown 2005). Biomedical authority was invoked to preserve racial purity from

degeneration and, in conjunction with state regulation of immigration, crime and public health, medical professionals were charged with civilizing the nation and reforming those groups seen as hindering economic growth (Rodriguez 2006: 34).

Given this history, it is not surprising that in the face of the most recent affront to economic prosperity – the devastating economic crisis of 2000 / 2001 – anxieties about Argentina's status as a modern nation of European heritage (Jacobson 2006) would surface with increased frequency. What has been less explored is how such economic anxieties have stoked not only a return to claims about the racial composition of the nation and its place in the world, but also how one of the languages in which such claims are posed is that of biomedical authority. Whereas throughout Argentina's history scientific expertise has been used to bolster claims to European modernity, a newly emerging medical tourism industry has argued this case in the reverse: assertions of a "white" and "European" identity are underwriting broad claims to biomedical expertise, and in particular, the kind of expertise needed to operate upon foreign, "First World" patients. It is not by chance that Buenos Aires markets itself as a safe place for surgery while simultaneously selling the idea of Argentina as an island of European culture in a sea of "tropical" Latin America. The following excerpt from a Buenos Aires-based medical tourism website is exemplary:

> The so-called "Reina del Plata" (Queen of the River Plate) is considered to be a city of European style, a characteristic that makes it very different from other Latin American capitals, more related to pre-Columbian traditions.

Such othering is not only racialized in the sense of placing other capitals in direct opposition to that which is "European," but temporal as well, relegating them to an ancient, traditional past in contrast to Buenos Aires' assertions of modernity.

The 2000 / 2001 economic crisis is also a primary focus in the medical tourism marketing literature. The crisis, which emerged from a series of intricate events including pegging the peso to the dollar in 1991, the rapid withdrawal of foreign investments, and extensive borrowing and neoliberal privatization under President Carlos Menem, produced immediate and serious effects (Uribe and Schwab 2002). Among these effects were the freezing of withdrawals from personal bank accounts in the effort to avoid a bank run, the dramatic resignation of President De la Rúa in December of 2001, who was subsequently succeeded by three presidents in fewer than two weeks, and, at the close of 2001, the largest debt default of any nation to date – $132 billion dollars (MacLachlan 2006).

Another significant change was the abandonment of dollar convertibility, which had throughout the 90s, ensured that prices for many goods and services were roughly equal to those in the U.S. and Europe. Devaluation established the worth of the peso at a fluctuating three- or four-to-one dollar rate, instantly putting Buenos Aires on the tourism radar as a newly affordable destination for foreigners willing to take advantage of a city in crisis, described by travel guides as "New York on sale."

Yet beyond the obvious currency conversion advantage to foreigners, the crisis also offers an important way to differentiate Argentina from other medical tourism destinations. Most significantly, the language of "crisis" implies a temporal rupture that implicitly refers back to a pre-crisis state, allowing companies to market medical procedures as less expensive than in the United States and Europe due to a temporary

financial situation, as opposed to a longstanding difference in the quality of expertise. Thus, the language of crisis circumvents (at least in part) the suspicious cost-differential upon which medical tourism hinges, and works to maintain claims of cultural and racial similarity between Argentina and Europe.

Taken together, marketing discourses that position Argentina as a desirable destination for medical care attempt to overcome the connotations of "risk" and "contamination" associated with spaces outside of the United States and Europe through assertions of shared European heritage and culture similarity. Differences in the cost of care are explained not as a result of fundamental differences between Argentina, the United States and Europe, but rather as a delimited "crisis" that has temporally rendered Argentina as an affordable destination for sophisticated, cosmopolitan travelers. In my interviews with transnational patients, however, it became apparent that they did not evenly adopt such messages, however consistently they appeared throughout marketing discourses and tourism literatures. For many patients, knowledge of Argentina and its medical expertise remained partial and uneven within the landscape of imperfect knowledge they inhabit prior to departure. It is only with travel and movement that the possibilities of surgery begin to be fleshed out as part of a wide-array of connections to people, objects and spaces that are moved by, and in turn move, transnational patients. Travel, and the forces of momentum it generates, is fundamentally part of the surgical experience, and as such, cannot be viewed as a separate moment of embodied practice.

## Bodies-in-Momentum

While the experiences of the transnational patients I worked with in Buenos Aires differed, there were many shared "moments" in common that can be usefully traced as part of examining movement and momentum at the heart of transnational surgery. Here, I use the term "moment" in two senses. First, in the colloquial usage, I highlight those experiences that emerged as common features of transnational medical travel, such as the moment of "arrival" and "meeting with the doctor." Secondly, pointing to the forces of momentum, I want to trace as part of such travel, I draw upon a second meaning within physics, which refers to a force acting, rotating or turning an object from a distance. I suggest this second definition points away from a locus of action and agency within any one subject or object, and instead, allows us to more expansively consider how a variety of forces enact, and are enacted, at any given "moment." Offering snapshots into each step in the process, I then link these moments to a broader set of experiences to demonstrate the momentum at play in transnational medical travel. Although a sort of artificial linearity comes with presenting these experiences sequentially, they offer an introduction to the complexities and particularities of transnational medical travel while revealing the ways in which intersubjective momentum is generated and embodied.

### First Contact

Meryl was accustomed to going online to gather and share information about her health. A white, education administrator living in urban Philadelphia, she had been an

active participant for several years on an online message board for people who have undergone bariatric surgery for weight loss, and was intrigued when she began seeing posts about going overseas for the follow-up full body skin removal surgery. "Skin removal surgery is considered elective," she explained, "I knew I couldn't afford to have it done in the U.S." From her home in Philadelphia, Meryl used patient-centered websites such as *PlasticSurgeryJourneys.com* to connect with people living in Florida, Boston, San Francisco, and even as far away as London and Amsterdam, all of whom were considering or had undergone surgery abroad. While she read positive comments about Costa Rica and Mexico, it was descriptions of Argentina that caught her eye. In particular, she kept seeing one doctor's name appear on the message boards. "At the time," she recalled, "it hadn't occurred to me that people might be paid – or get discounts on surgery or whatever – to write a positive review. Seeing his name over and over again, it just started feeling like something I should look into."

As Meryl began considering the idea of traveling to Argentina, she discovered another member of her online bariatric support group who also wanted to go abroad for surgery. She recalled thinking, "This is great … we can go to Argentina together, share an apartment, cut down on costs, and stagger our surgeries to help each other during recovery." She felt relieved that the trip would be something she could undertake with someone else, which would certainly make "traveling half way around the world" less frightening. While Meryl clearly engaged in extensive online research, she ultimately chose Argentina because it "seemed like the pieces were falling into place." Before even leaving her home in Philadelphia, movement was underway in the form of such "falling pieces": a doctor's name repeatedly appearing just as she began searching, chance encounters online, connecting with someone who just happened to want the same surgery as she did, with a travel schedule that matched up with her own. Skype video chats with a woman in Florida, who she had never met in person, lent a face and a voice to a process that had previously existed only in her own mind. "I guess having Melody doing this at the same time, really made it … I *might* have gone on my own … I don't know…" she trailed off. And as the coordination of their mutual plans became more complex and detailed, so too did the obligation to one another grow. Even though Meryl's pre-existing cardiac condition gave her pause, she began to feel as though she was bound up in Melody's ability to undergo surgery. The plans, even at such an early stage, were no longer simply her own.

While the conventions of social obligation have long been at the heart of the anthropological project (Malinowski 1922; Mauss 1990), what is striking about Meryl and other patients' moment of "first contact" is the strength of both affect and obligation resulting through connections that, nevertheless, remain nebulous, intangible and geographically remote. What starts as mere exploration and the gathering of information soon leads to long-distanced connections with strangers also pursuing journeys that remain largely unknown. What begins as mere online "chatting" with a stranger to whom they are not obligated, may become – before they themselves even realize it – a *felt* obligation. Such obligations need not be understood as burdens. As Meryl indicates, she was comforted by the prospect of companionship that her obligation to Melody entailed. And yet, such obligations also produce a particular force, a momentum that sets patients into motion in ways that may not occur otherwise. As obligations accrue, the force required to slow or stop the body in motion may feel stronger than the energy required to keep moving forward.

## Care and Intersubjective Planning

During our first conversation, Shelly clarified that it was not Dr Bruno that moved her to come to Argentina. "If I had to say, the person who *really* made me comfortable was Lola," she told me, referring to the Argentine medical tourism coordinator who worked with Dr Bruno and his patients. Prior to connecting with Lola, Shelly had reached out to several doctors, all of European heritage, with less than pleasing results. After emailing her picture to a doctor indicating that she was interested in a blepharoplasty (eye-lift) surgery, she received his reply, in which he suggested that she also correct the width of her nose, which he deemed too wide. As a middle-aged black woman, the racist undertones of his unsolicited surgical advice encouraged Shelly to search elsewhere. Lola quickly put her at ease and facilitated her connection to Dr Bruno.

When I interviewed Lola about her experiences working with Shelly and other transnational patients, she pointed out that although her official job was to help patients plan for surgeries, in reality, it is not possible to finalize surgical plans prior to the patient arriving in Argentina for an in-person consultation. Emailed photos, even when taken from multiple angles and under appropriate lighting conditions, rarely give doctors the information they need to evaluate skin texture, underlying bone structure, or patient lifestyles. "Planned" surgeries, thus, can be understood as convenient fictions that hold an ideal result in place, while Lola coordinates the logistics surrounding the yet-to-be-determined outcomes. As Lola observed, "[patients] want you to tell them exactly what will be done and what it will cost. But if I did that, I would be lying … there are companies here in Argentina who will tell you want you want to hear … they will take your money from you up front, and only after you are here in Buenos Aires they say the [specific] surgery is not possible and you need to stay for one more month."

Alternatively, Lola's approach is to focus on giving potential patients information about Dr Bruno, and to educate them about Argentina more generally: "Some people already know that Buenos Aires is what the they call the 'Paris of South America' … like a European country, it is the food, the wine … and it is clean … and safer" than other destinations, she explained. Lola also offers those intangible extras that put patients at ease, helping to arrange for apartments, for example, as well as offering to cook soup or run errands for medication once they arrive. When asked about the time spent with Shelly, Lola reflected, "She was a very cool woman … I spent a lot of time at her apartment. She did my astrological chart – not a normal one – but a very, very detailed one … we talked and talked." In short, Lola offers potential patients like Shelly not only logistical expertise, but affective ties – a warm and caring friend who just happens to work for their doctor.

My aim is not to question the sincerity of Lola's warmth and friendship, but to see how such friendships grow even as the economic transactions of such connections remain obscured. Patients are not required to pay directly for Lola's time, as she receives a per-patient fee directly from the doctors with whom she works. Crucial to this economic arrangement is the fact that unless a patient moves forward with their plans for surgery, she will not be paid. While connecting in ways that exceed the language of market logic, this excess – of warmth, and kinship – also comes with increased ties and obligations that move patients along towards undergoing surgery abroad.

Many transnational patients reflected upon the pulling sensation of such affective obligations to an ever-expanding network of people and places, and how they experienced the creation of such ties as they considered undertaking surgery abroad. That such a pull is experienced and embodied as a force of movement was evident in the metaphorical language many patients invoked, commonly described as taking a "leap-of-faith." Embedded in this telling phrase is both the sensation of movement conveyed through the description of *leaping*, as well as the acknowledgment that such movement occurs within a larger force, *faith*, located outside logical reason or careful research. Rather than a individual decision, "faith" implies a surrender or submission to a force larger than oneself, a giving over to the pull of affective ties, the synchronicity of chance encounters, and to a network of widely dispersed people whose stakes are increasingly tied up with one's own future. To "leap" is to enter into movement, to accelerate the moving pieces – people, places and objects – that surround oneself, as their motion, in turn, moves you. More than merely a decision or choice, leaps-of-faith presume a particular way of being-in-the-world, the experience of sensing and feeling the forces at work beyond oneself while simultaneously generating momentum that sets other pieces into play. Or, as one patient explained to me after reflecting on her leap-of-faith in coming to Argentina: "I *was moved* to come here."

## Arrival in the Not-yet-known

"It's *June*!" Melody exclaims, pulling her thin, cotton jacket tighter, her capri-style pants exposing several inches of bared ankle above white athletic shoes. Although she had "read up" on Buenos Aires before boarding her flight from Miami, the opposite seasons of the southern hemisphere appeared disorienting. "I just can't believe it can be this cold in *summer*," she complained, her arrival coordinating with the coldest period of the Argentine winter.

Melody's Florida aesthetic cannot be explained away as simple ill-preparedness. Rather, her miscalculation of hemispheric seasons seems to reflect other things that had remained "unknown" prior to her arrival. Having only ever traveled with her family as part of a Disney Caribbean cruise, Melody admitted, "I thought that Argentina … South America … is a lot more like Mexico." In her tropically infused imagination, Melody had expected if not sandy beaches, at least warmer temperatures, unsafe drinking water, darker skin. "I really didn't know what to expect," she admitted, as we sat in my living room during her first evening in the city.

Despite Argentina's intense marketing efforts to position itself as a "European" tourist destination within Latin America, many transnational patients seemed only to partially "know" such images, if at all. For every mention of the tango or European-style boulevards, there were expectations of coming face-to-face with a *gaucho*, as well as anxieties about whether or not to eat the fruits and vegetables sold in the capital's high-end grocery stores. That such anxieties are experienced as sensations as patients move through the world became clear during an afternoon snack of sliced fruit I prepared at Melody's apartment. Chewing slowly, a concerned look spreading on her face, Melody asked several times, "Does this taste right to you?" That Argentine pears and organic garlic are a common staple of U.S. supermarkets speaks to the pervasive

remainders of a colonial imagination: for every fruit deemed safe to consume and literally incorporate into the body within the borders of the United States, this same fruit was suddenly suspect as disease-causing when found within the country of origin. If the space, climate and safety of the city remained difficult to anticipate before arrival, even harder to imagine were the doctors, nurses and clinics upon which patients' health and well-being depended.

That such crucial information remained uncomfortably vague was also apparent in a joke I overheard one evening as a patient chatted over speakerphone with her business partner in Colorado. Having called to solicit help setting up her Internet connection in her rented apartment, the in-the-know colleague turned the conversation to the surgery at hand, teasingly asking whether she had "seen the veterinarian yet." While clearly offered in a playful tone, the subtext highlighted what remained disturbingly unknown: the quality – perhaps, even the very existence – of a "real" doctor.

As these moments of arrival reveal, most journeys do not follow a straightforward trajectory, in which confidence and ease accrue with each experience. Rather, patients' arrivals to Buenos Aires were marked with the ruptures of surprise, anxiety, and mounting questions. That patients move – and were moved – through such discomfort points to the forces of momentum at work in their travel. In a casual aside as we relaxed over a cup of coffee during her second night in the city, Melody remarked, "If I really stopped to think about all of this – I don't know if I could go through with it." Nothing is more central, so it seems, as the experience of not stopping – of already being-in-motion.

## Preparing for Post-surgery through Objects

Before Melody even had a chance to meet with her doctor, we spent the first few days following her arrival tackling a series of errands: sorting through and signing the apartment rental contract, searching for the best exchange rates at *casas de cambio* to convert large stacks of dollar bills into pesos, figuring out how to accommodate her particular tastes and restrictive diet within the confines of unfamiliar foods, buying cheap bed sheets that could be thrown away once they were inevitably stained with blood, and visiting a surgical supply store for post-surgical garments and implant sizing. Although at this point in her journey Melody had not fully "decided" whether or not to move forward with her surgery – and did not entirely know which procedures would be possible – she moved closer towards a surgical outcome, propelled by these moments of preparation.

Our visit to the surgical supply store is a particularly clear example of the momentum at work in patients' experiences in that it shows the power of objects to move patients into a particular way of imagining and experiencing their yet-to-be bodies. I joined Melody, another medical tourist, Rogier, and their British patient coordinator, Sarah, at an unassuming store on a quiet block in the upper-middle-class residential area near *Parque Las Heras*. The purpose of the store was not immediately clear to anyone other than Sarah, who had accompanied other patients there before. "They sell this to anyone?" Rogier wondered aloud, joking that he might purchase extra implants and boxes of Restalyn filler to sell back in the Netherlands. When asked if they needed a prescription, Sarah explained, "You don't need an actual piece of paper, but I think they talk to Dr Bulich and he lets them know we are coming." The two

attendants behind the long counter were both working with customers, so we browsed the glass cases that filled the first third of the store.

The first case seemed innocuous enough, filled with various objects such as surgical hats and masks in a variety of prints and colors. We chuckled softly, pointing to the jungle-print surgical cap, covered with brown cartoon monkeys and striped zebras. The next cabinet, however, was not so comforting. Our eyes followed row after row of surgical tools: razor sharp scalpels of various sizes and thicknesses gleamed off the back mirror, followed by piercing metal hooks, small pointed hammers and jagged, sharp-toothed saws. "What are they *sawing*?" Melody asked, eyes widening. Interspersed among truly torturous looking instruments were various Disney and Japanese anime figurines, including a three-inch-high rendering of a young woman with impossibly large eyes, bare breasts and exposed underwear. Rogier exploded in laughter upon seeing the figurine, asking, "What is *that*?" The set up of the shop was perplexing – bizarrely split between selling surgeons the tools of their trade and helping patients choose implants and garments for their body. Only surgeons, I mused, would be so nonplussed gazing upon these sharp, menacing tools that cartoon figurines might provide a moment of amusement in an otherwise mundane shopping trip. For the two patients waiting to consider implants and garments, however, this display seemed gruesome and macabre, objects that simultaneously elicited humor and fear.

When the attendants were available to assist us, they did so through Sarah's laborious and slow translation from English to Spanish. Our first order of business was trying to sort out which post-surgical compression garments Melody and Rogier would use. We flipped through magazines featuring gorgeous models absent of swelling, bruising or stitches, bound into smooth looking black and peachy-flesh colored garments. Melody was instructed that she would need as much coverage as possible, something that began at her knees, compressing her entire body, stopping just below her neck and extending to her elbows. Initial preferences such as color and lace detailing soon gave way to the reality that the store's in-stock merchandise was far more limited than the pages of the thick, glossy catalogue might lead one to believe.

The attendant pushed two beige wetsuit-shaped garments across the counter and suggested Melody try them on in the small dressing room. "I was imagining something more like a bustier," Melody laughed, as Sarah took the garments and thanked the attendant. The garment was made of a recalcitrant, foamy skin meant to squeeze and hold the body tightly in place, smooth stitches and maintain even pressure over bloated, swelling limbs. Far from straightforward, attempting to find the right size for Melody proved challenging. Cursing under her breath, she attempted to twist and fit her body into the narrow, restrictive holes of the garment, as it, in turn, stretched and pulled at her skin with a rubbery grasp. One major challenge of choosing the right size was that it required trying to imagine future changes to her body that remained unclear and unknown. "This is really tight," Melody started, "but I guess a lot of this (gesturing to the flesh of her torso) is going to be gone." "Right," Sarah confirmed, "but don't forget about the swelling… it's all going to swell up." The unpredictable calculus of soon to be missing flesh and fat, counteracted by puffy, swollen post-surgical wounds, proved difficult.

Without having yet finalized the surgical options at hand, the purchase of the material object of the garment incurred additional obligations to, as well as momentum towards, a surgical outcome. Beyond the financial obligation and investment in the

garment itself, fitting one's body into its tight, unforgiving grasp required the temporary embodiment of a future moment, a way of feeling and moving inside an outcome that could not yet be fully imagined. In order to successfully purchase the garment, for example, Melody had to select which size of breast implants she wanted to receive, and yet, had not been aware that the choice of implant volume would be hers to make. "One option is 475 cc's the other is 525 cc's," Sarah explained, holding out two lumps of crystalline gel for us to pinch, stretch and consider. As the four of us crowded behind the curtain of the dressing room, we slipped various sizes of implants into her bra, remarking upon the effect of each. "Of course it won't look like this," Sarah reminds her. "The implant will be under the skin and muscle, and some of what you have now is going to come off, I imagine…"

Our four bodies bumped and pressed against each other in the small space of a dressing room designed to accommodate a single body, despite the fact that it was not unusual to have patient coordinators, store clerks and others working intimately with patients in determining garment sizing. We squeezed and pulled at the implants now tucked against her chest without restraint, as the sacks of silicone held tightly by the constricting, flesh-colored garment did not yet seem like part of "her" body. In that moment, with the blur of the grabbing hands and gabbing mouths, the collective strain of envisioning what could come of her body using only the flesh, silicone, cloth and mirror before us, it became increasingly difficult to feel where Melody's individual body ended, and where it began.

Like the forms of affective obligation explored above, material artifacts of a future surgery also exact their obligations. The price of transnational surgery is not limited to the thousands of dollars spent on international plane fare, apartment rental (paid in cash at the start of the lease), the cost of hospital rooms and doctors fees, as well as the loss of wages for weeks or even months absent from work. Patients additionally invest in a multitude of material artifacts: post-surgical garments, implants, bed sheets, towels, rolls of cotton bandages, compression socks, sitting pillows, ointment, pain pills, antibiotics, and a variety of other supplements and creams recommended by patient websites. Beyond the mere price of such material objects, they also incur a kind of future-oriented obligation – their very usefulness negated if the surgery does not move forward. Put differently, the momentum of transnational medical travel activates a diverse range of actants (Latour 1987, 2005): doctors, implants, nurses, planes, medical tourism coordinators, contracts, compression garments, other transnational patients, bottles of pills. Scattered across geographic space, and with a variety of interests and purposes, the multitude of actants collectively generate forces of momentum in excess of any individual patient, and work to spread the boundaries of the subject across multiple people, places, and temporalities.

## Meeting the Doctor

Carla had prepared a list of questions and written them on index cards in advance of meeting with Dr Zirlinger or "Dr Z," as she referred to him. If she did not get the answers she was looking for, she informed me, she would not go through with the surgery. "To be honest, I just really hope I like him, but I guess if I don't get a good feeling, I can just tell myself that this is a vacation … a long, expensive vacation."

For twenty minutes we sit in a waiting room filled with soft classical music and large stacks of magazine, mostly in Spanish. Carla glances at her watch every few minutes, taking out her index cards and running her fingers along their crisp edges. The receptionist had not given her any forms to fill out, or long lists of medical conditions to review and check, and without such purposeful tasks, time seemed to tick by slowly. Eventually, we heard footsteps and a deep voice (in Spanish), from the receptionist's desk just outside the room. Dr Zirlinger, a tall man with salt-and-pepper hair and dressed in a white coat, approached Carla and leaned in for a kiss to the cheek. After he and I enacted a similar greeting, he asked, "Shall we go into my office?"

We followed him down a hallway, and as we walked, Carla looked back at me over her shoulder, her lips parting into a smile and her eyes growing momentarily wide, although I could not tell if in excitement or fear. The office was spacious and carefully decorated, a row of windows filling the space with late afternoon sun. There was nothing particularly "medical" about the feel of the place, the sanitized examining room with its butcher-paper covered table and antiseptic smell hidden away in an adjacent room. Although there was a plush, deep brown leather couch in the center of the room, he motioned for us to settle into the chairs at his desk, his hand directing her with a light touch to her back.

Sitting down at the desk, Carla immediately noticed pictures of the doctor's daughters and grandchildren, which were not facing privately towards him, but displayed outwards, inviting us to know something more about him. "My oldest daughter, Ines, is thirty-two," he began, pointing to a picture of a beautiful woman with round, brown eyes and curly hair. "My grandson just turned two," he said, smiling broadly as he pointed to the small child the woman cradled on her lap. "My other daughter is twenty-five," he explained, gesturing to a softly-lit photo of a woman leaning against a wall, brown curls escaping a colorful, bohemian scarf wrapped around her head. "And your wife?" Carla inquired. He nodded, and responded, "We are divorced … five years ago." "Yep, I know what that's like," she chimed in, "it's actually part of the reason I'm here." She continued, beginning to laugh, "My ex-husband was much older than me … but my boyfriend, Alan, well, I like to tell people that I could have celebrated his birth with a legal drink!"

Over the next thirty minutes Dr Zirlinger examined Carla's skin, asked her questions about her medical history, and then, after leading her into the adjacent clinical room, began to take pictures from all angles. "We cut here … and here…" he said, tracing invisible lines on her face with his fingertip as she watched intently in a mirror she held with both hands. Later during her stay in Argentina, Carla would try to explain the loss of feeling of the nerves in her face after surgery by having me press my right index finger against her own, and run the fingertips of my left hand up and down the outside of our pressed fingers. This exercise produces a strange sensation of disconnect, as if I had lost sensation in my right hand, or suddenly stopped understanding which hand was mine and which was hers. Watching Dr Zirlinger touch Carla's face in this way produced a similar effect of disorientation. As he confidently asserted the path of the cuts his scalpel would soon make upon her skin, it was the light tracing of his fingertips that became her only chance to witness and feel the sensations of the impending surgery. Staring intently at a reflection of her own, unsmiling face, she watched as the doctor mimed surgical slicing, enacting and bringing the gestures of a future surgery into the moment at hand. The next time he touched her

face in this way, she would be unconscious. After additional information about swelling and bruising, Dr Zirlinger told her "Okay, I will see you then, on Thursday, at ten. Please remember not to drink any water that morning… not even coffee."

As Carla and I walked out into the lovely sunny afternoon, she seemed genuinely excited by the meeting, rhetorically asking, "Wasn't he so nice?" and "Didn't you think he was *handsome*?" While her assessment of Dr Zirlinger as "handsome" did not explicitly draw attention to race or his European identity, her invocation of appearance in a moment of reflecting on expertise speaks to the slippages between race, aesthetics and biomedical authority. Such conflation occurs not only within the processes of cosmetic surgery (Gilman 1999), as seen with the unsolicited advice given to Shelly to narrow the width of her nose, but also within the consolidation of biomedical authority more generally. Several of the doctors I came to know unabashedly claimed the value of a shared "European aesthetic," which they believed allowed them to better understand the desires of U.S. and European patients.

I inquired whether Carla felt she had received answers to her questions, the index cards now buried somewhere deep within her purse. Not having referred to the cards during her conversation with Dr Zirlinger, she simply explained, "It just feels right… I mean, this is why I am here, right?" The logic underlying the question, "this is why I am *here*, right?" was expressed by a number of the patients I worked with. While on the surface the statement seems straightforward (why else would they have traveled so far but to get surgery?), it also reveals the power of the force of momentum inherent to their journey. While many of the patients I worked with insisted they would not go through with the surgery if they were not comfortable with the doctor or did not approve of the clinic, often by the time their meeting with the doctor took place, the very fact of their being in Argentina was enough to justify moving forward. What begins as a slow, exploratory process saturated with unknowns and uncertainty, gradually cultivates obligations among a variety of people, places and objects. After a given point, it is no longer possible to distinguish whether it is the desire for surgery that justifies the long journey or the journey itself that justifies surgery.

## The Day of Surgery

Carla and I returned to Dr Zirlinger's office on Thursday morning. She had wanted to ride the subway over, as the cost was only sixty centavos (twenty cents), allowing her to save money for a taxi ride to her apartment following surgery. Meeting just outside the entrance, I noticed that Carla looked a bit less polished than her normal self, no make-up or jewelry allowed on this day. She wore a buttoned-down shirt, as requested by the doctor, enabling her to dress without pulling anything over her face and risk damaging what was soon to be freshly-sutured skin. The fluttery excitement that had saturated her voice only a few days before was noticeably dampened, her speech slow and even.

Unlike many destinations where transnational patients are sequestered in "five star" hotel-hospital compounds, patients in Buenos Aires move about the city, shop at local markets, recover in apartments, and, like Carla, even ride the subway to their surgery. Ironically, it is far more likely in India – a medical tourism destination country that must overcome a public image of endemic poverty – that foreign patients are likely to

be secluded within sanitized spaces and offered round the clock care (Cohen in Ong and Collier 2005: 89). In Buenos Aires, where the city itself is marketed as a European space of modernity, transnational patients move along everyday routes, experiencing firsthand the disconnect between the image of cosmopolitan modernity and the reality of the post-crisis city that surrounds them.

The subway car was characteristically crowded that morning, and we huddled close together, crushed on all sides by men and women in business suits, as well as loud packs of students blasting music in their headphones. Whenever we rode the subway together, Carla would animatedly point to the people around her, commenting with fascination at men hawking just released DVDs and children in worn clothing selling stickers and batteries for two pesos. Once, while casually chatting about her plans for surgery, she had been horrified to see a badly burned woman, her copper skin marbled with white and red scars, shuffling up and down the subway car begging for change. But on this morning, Carla kept her eyes closed, and together with the mass of morning riders, our bodies swayed and jolted in rhythm with the train until we arrived at the Agüero station.

After an initial conversation with the receptionist, we were led upstairs to the second floor of the clinic and into a small, dark room with a single hospital bed and a chair. A woman we assumed to be a nurse or medical assistant (she simply introduced herself as "Maria"), brought a pale blue hospital gown, gauzy sterile cap and booties. "Nothing but these," she said, placing the garments onto the bed. "But what about my compression socks?" Carla asked, suddenly startled. Carla, who had read online that such socks could be worn during surgery to reduce the risk of embolism, pleaded her case until the woman promised to check with the doctor. As Carla disrobed, it seemed as though this slight deviation had unnerved her, and she sat nervously, on the bed, gripping the white and grey compression socks, explaining their virtues to me.

Soon, a large man we had never met entered the room. In broken English, he introduced himself as the anesthesiologist, and told us they were almost ready to begin the surgery. "Where is Dr Z?" Carla asked, but he only nodded silently. A clipboard in hand, and speaking in very slow English, he inquired about prior surgeries, allergies and medical history. When she informed him of an allergy to an antibiotic using the English brand name, he stared down at the floor, tapping his pencil against the clipboard. "I don't think this will be a problem," he finally said, scribbling in the margins of his paper. As he walked from the room, Carla observed, "You think they would have asked me all those questions before now! Look at me … I'm already in the gown!"

Sitting on the bed, stripped of her layers of makeup, clothes and jewelry, deprived of her morning caffeine, wrapped in a thin blue material, and thirsting from a lack of liquids, she did seem somehow "poised" for surgery. What other direction would now be possible? After a few more minutes, Dr Zirlinger arrived in the room, handing me a pair of scrubs and gauzy hair net so that I could observe the surgery from inside the operating room. Carla, almost shaking with nervous energy, again pleaded her case for wearing her compression socks, and Dr Zirlinger agreed that it would be fine for her to wear them. After rolling the tight socks up to her knees and slipping the booties into place, they left the room and crossed the short hallway, Dr Zirlinger holding open the operating room door for Carla to enter. I quickly changed into my scrubs and hurried after.

## The Recovery

During her time in Buenos Aires, Melody underwent three separate surgeries for skin removal, liposuction and breast reconstruction. Following each surgery, she convalesced in a three-bedroom apartment she rented with Meryl, which they asked me to share with them for the month and half of their stay. I agreed, not fully understanding the ways in which I would be intimately connected to Melody's recovery. In certain respects, the "recovery" after each surgery served as a beat of "rest" in contrast to the other momentum generating activities and experiences that move patients along towards surgery.

Recovery also offered one of the clearest experiences of the intersubjective modes of embodiment within the experiences of transnational surgery. Although ethnography is inherently an intersubjective process, the momentum of our own projects and travel agendas remains largely undertheorized within the literature. While most patients did not have an anthropologist willing to take on the duties of post-surgical care in the name of participant observation, it was not unusual to receive care from patient coordinators, other patients, or hired medical assistants in the case of more complicated or multiple surgeries. In my case, following each surgery, Melody and I operated in tandem, working to manage her painful, oozing, post-surgical body. I became intimately familiar with her every wound, cleaning her morning and night with soapy pads that I ran over the oozing scabs of her breasts, as well as the lines of stitches that ran up and down both arms and legs, encircling her midsection. I, myself, did not bleed or experience the searing pain of recently cut flesh, but I carried heavy bags of drained blood and fluid and emptied them into the toilet, reconnecting them to the tubes that sprouted from her abdomen. I came to know the bruises of her body, including the ones on her lower back that she herself could not see, where the doctor's five fingered hand imprint was clearly visible, outlined in the purple, red and yellow of her tender skin.

While I initially used the latex gloves her doctor had provided, the gloves proved cumbersome, and our small supply soon ran out. With my bare fingers, I ran antibiotic ointment over her wounds, and wrapped her arms tightly with cotton pads and compression bandages, becoming familiar with which angles hurt the most, and how much pressure was too much or not enough. Melody would tell me how to rearrange the pillows, adjust the blanket, turn up the air conditioning, or draw the blinds to adjust the chill, heat, ache or drowsiness of each moment. When her compression garment became so tight it was unbearably painful, she begged me to get a steak knife from the kitchen. Responding not to the doctor' s instructions, but the intensity of her discomfort, I ran the blade closely along her skin, shredding the tightest sections of fabric from her arms and legs, my relief in not cutting her blending into her relief in being released from the garment's tight grasp.

My presence as a separate individual gradually diminished, and she no longer requested privacy during long conversations with her husband and children, asking instead that I undertake the lengthy process of changing her bandages as she chatted about intimate family life. Although I never took my coffee with anything but milk, my taste buds became accustomed to the generous amounts of sugar she preferred, as I sampled each cup to make sure it met her tastes before serving it to her. Once, when I experienced a blindingly intense migraine headache, she insisted I take one of the pain pills she had been prescribed, explaining, "If you're in pain and can't move, there is no one here to take care of me… so I'm in pain too."

## CONCLUSION

Through the moments outlined above, I have aimed to show how transnational patients both generate and are moved by intersubjective forces of momentum as they travel abroad for surgery. I have turned to the metaphor of momentum to more closely capture the embodied experiences of travel and movement in ways that current models of transnational "moving bodies" or the agentive gestures of "body motion" do not. These initial experiences of momentum were described to me in a variety of ways: the intersubejctive pull of affective ties forged over great geographic distance, the sensation of having the pieces and details of travel "fall into place," the initiation of travel despite imperfect knowledge as a kind of "leap-of-faith."

The metaphor of momentum, I suggest, allows us to better see how such movement is in excess of individual patients, and encourages us to apprehend the collective forces generated along a range of people, objects, places, and temporalities. Felt as affective obligations building towards a surgical outcome, patients' modes of being-in-the-world were saturated by momentum as they whirred about Buenos Aires exchanging dollars for pesos, squeezing into dressing rooms to collectively imagine a future body, sipping hot coffee with medical tourism coordinators, and nervously assessing safety and expertise, experienced as a gentle kiss to the cheek from a "handsome" doctor.

Objects, too, enacted their force upon patients, often in ways that pulled them into a future moment in which an object's usefulness could be realized: the pressing weight of a suitcase handle, heavy with the artifacts needed to care for a post-surgery body; the tight, grasping sensation of an unforgiving compression garment, its pressure requiring a reorientation to a future body that had yet to be created; bottles of pain pills and tubes of antibacterial ointments that would need to be used, or would remain as remnants of a surgery that did not occur.

The city of Buenos Aires itself enacted a force upon patients, conjuring up romantic images of the "Paris of South America" and trading on connotations of cosmopolitan modernity and white, European heritage to ease patient's biomedical anxieties. Once within the city's borders, however, the sensations of being in Buenos Aires also produced experiences of dislocation: the suspicious taste of a potentially contaminated fruit, failed and frustrating Internet connections that elicited jokes about "seeing the veterinarian," crowded subway rides demanding close proximity to the poverty of a city reeling from crisis. And yet, the very fact of "being" in Buenos Aires also served as a force of momentum, moving patients, encouraging them to ask of themselves, why are you *here*, if not for surgery?

By attending to these aspects of transnational travel, it becomes possible to better apprehend the ways in which patients did not simply enact movement, but simultaneously moved – and were moved by – forces in excess of themselves. Such an approach is useful not only as a way to better understand the dynamics of movement and motion in relationship to bodies, but also in order to shift our focus from the agentive actions of individual subjects towards the embodied experiences of intersubjectivity. If anthropology has largely succeeded in de-centering the normative subject from our theoretical assumptions, we still have much work to do in order to ethnographically capture the intersubjective experiences and modes of embodiment that remain.

## NOTE

1 This research was supported by a National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Award and a Fulbright Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Award. I offer my deepest gratitude to Fran Mascia-Lees for her generous intellectual support throughout this endeavor.

## REFERENCES

Anderson, Warwick, 2006 Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race and Hygiene in the Philippines. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Appadurai, Arjun, 1996 Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Basch, Linda G., Nina Glick Schiller and Cristina Szanton Blanc, 1994 Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments and Deterritorialized Nation-States. London: Gordon and Breach.

Bashford, Alison, 2004 Imperial Hygiene: A Critical History of Colonialism, Nationalism and Public Health. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bashford, Alison, 2006 Medicine at the Border: Disease, Globalization and Security, 1850 to the Present. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Birdwhistell, Ray L., 1985 Kinesics and Context; Essays on Body Motion Communication. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Bishop, Rachel A. and James A. Litch, 2000 Personal View: Medical Tourism Can Do Harm. BMJ: British Medical Journal 320(7240): 1017.

Bookman, Milica Zarkovic and Karla R. Bookman, 2007 Medical Tourism in Developing Countries. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bordo, Susan, 1993 Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1977 Outline of a Theory of Practice. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre and Loïc J. D. Wacquant, 1992 An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Brown, J. Andrew, 2005 Test Tube Envy: Science and Power in Argentine Narrative. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press.

Brownell, Susan, 1995 Training the Body for China: Sports in the Moral Order of the People's Republic. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bruner, Edward M., 2005 Culture on Tour: Ethnographies of Travel. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Butler, Judith, 1990 Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. New York: Routledge.

Butler, Judith, 1993 Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex." New York: Routledge.

Clifford, James, 1997 Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Connell, J., 2006 Medical Tourism: Sea, Sun, Sand and Surgery. Tourism management 27(6): 1093–1100.

Csordas, Thomas J., 1994 Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Csordas, Thomas J., 1997 The Sacred Self: A Cultural Phenomenology of Charismatic Healing. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Desmond, Jane C., 2002 Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dyck, Noel and Eduardo P. Archetti, 2003 Sport, Dance and Embodied Identities. Oxford; Berg.
Farnell, Brenda, 1994 Ethno-Graphics and the Moving Body. Man, New Series. 29(4): 929–974.
Farnell, Brenda, 1999 Moving Bodies, Acting Selves. Annual Review of Anthropology 28: 341–373.
Farnell, Brenda, 2000 Getting Out of the Habitus: An Alternative Model of Dynamically Embodied Social Action. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 6(3).
Ferguson, James and Akhil Gupta, 2002 Spatializing States: Toward an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality. American Ethnologist 29(4): 981–1002.
Foucault, Michel, 1977 Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison. New York: Pantheon Books.
Foucault, Michel, 1978 The History of Sexuality. New York: Pantheon Books.
Foucault, Michel and Colin Gordon, 1980 Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977. New York: Pantheon Books.
Gilman, Sander L., 1999 Making the Body Beautiful: A Cultural History of Aesthetic Surgery. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Gilroy, Paul, 1991 "There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack": The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Gilroy, Paul, 1993 The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Grimson, Alejandro and Gabriel Kessler, 2005 On Argentina and the Southern Cone: Neoliberalism and National Imaginations. New York: Routledge.
Grosz, Elizabeth A., 1994 Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Guano, Emanuela, 2002 Spectacles of Modernity: Transnational Imagination and Local Hegemonies in Neoliberal Buenos Aires. Cultural Anthropology 17(2): 181–209.
Guano, Emanuela, 2004 The Denial of Citizenship: "Barbaric" Buenos Aires and the Middle-Class Imaginary. City and Society 16(1): 69–97.
Heidegger, Martin and Joan Stambaugh, 1996 Being and Time: A Translation of Sein Und Zeit. Albany: State University of New York Press.
Holtzman, Jon, 2000 Nuer Journeys, Nuer Lives: Sudanese Refugees in Minnesota. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
Horowitz, M. D. and Rosensweig J. A., 2007 Medical Tourism–Health Care in the Global Economy. Physician Executive 33(6).
Inhorn, Marcia C. and Pasquale Patrizio, 2009 Rethinking Reproductive "Tourism" as Reproductive "Exile." Fertil Steril 92(3): 904–906.
Jacobson, Shari, 2006 Modernity, Conservative Religious Movements and the Female Subject: Newly Ultraorthodox Sephardi Women in Buenos Aires. American Anthropologist 108(2): 336–346.
Joseph, Galen, 2000 Taking Race Seriously: Whiteness in Argentina's National and Transnational Imaginary. Identities 7(3): 333–371.
Keller, Charles M. and Janet Dixon Keller, 1996 Cognition and Tool Use: The Blacksmith at Work. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
Latour, Bruno 1987 Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Latour, Bruno, 2005 Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
MacLachlan, Colin M., 2006 Argentina: What Went Wrong. Westport: Praeger Publishers.
MacLeod, Roy M. and Milton James Lewis, 1988 Disease, Medicine and Empire: Perspectives on Western Medicine and the Experience of European Expansion. New York: Routledge.
Mahmood, Saba 2001 Articles – Feminist Theory, Embodiment and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival. Cultural Anthropology. 16(2): 202–236.

Mahmood, Saba, 2005 Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Malinowski, Bronislaw, 1922 Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea, London and New York: G. Routledge & Sons; E. P. Dutton & Co.

Malkki, Liisa H., 1995 Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory and National Cosmology Among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Martin, Emily, 1987 The Woman in the Body: A Cultural Analysis of Reproduction. Boston: Beacon Press.

Mattoo, Aaditya and Randeep Rathindran, 2006 How Health Insurance Inhibits Trade in Health Care. Health Affairs 25(2): 258–268.

Mauss, Marcel, 1973 Techniques of the Body. Economy and Society 2: 70–88.

Mauss, Marcel, 1990 The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies. New York: Norton.

Mazzaschi, Andrew and Emily Anne McDonald (eds.), 2011 Symposium: Gender and Medical Tourism. Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society 36(2).

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 1962 Phenomenology of Perception. New York: Humanities Press.

Miyazaki, Hirokazu, 2007 The Method of Hope: Anthropology, Philosophy and Fijian Knowledge. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

*Momentum*, 2010 *In* Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. Retrieved August 9, 2010, from http: / / www.merriam-webster.com / dictionary / momentum.

Moya, J. C., 2006 A Continent of Immigrants: Postcolonial Shifts in the Western Hemisphere. Hispanic American Historical Review 86: 1–28.

Ong, Aihwa, 1999 Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Ong, Aihwa and Stephen J. Collier, 2005 Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics and Ethics as Anthropological Problems. Oxford: Blackwell.

Rodríguez, Julia, 2006 Civilizing Argentina: Science, Medicine and the Modern State. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Sassen, Saskia, 1998 Globalization and its Discontents: Essays on the New Mobility of People and Money. New York: New Press.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, 2000 The Global Traffic in Human Organs. Current Anthropology 41(2): 191–224.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, 2001 Commodity Fetishism in Organs Trafficking. Body & Society 7(2 / 3): 31–62.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, 2002 The Ends of the Body: Commodity Fetishism and the Global Traffic in Organs. SAIS Review 22(1): 61–80.

Smith, Valene L., 1989 Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Sobo E. J., 2009 Medical Travel: What it Means, Why it Matters. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 28(4): 326–335.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt, 2005 Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Turner, Bryan S., 1984 The Body and Society: Explorations in Social Theory. Oxford: Blackwell.

Turner, Leigh, 2007 "First World Health Care at Third World Prices": Globalization, Bioethics and Medical Tourism. BioSocieties 2: 303–325.

Uribe, Juan Pablo and Nicole Schwab, 2002 El Sector Salud Argentino en Medio de la Crisis. Oficina del Banco Mundial para Argentina, Chile, Paraguay y Uruguay. Documento de Trabajo N. 2 / 02.

Urry, John, 2002 The Tourist Gaze. London and Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Whittaker, Andrea, 2008 Pleasure and Pain: Medical Travel in Asia. Global Public Health 3(3): 271–290.

Whittaker, Andrea, 2009 Global Technologies and Transnational Reproduction in Thailand. Asian Studies Review 33(3): 319–332.

Williams, Drid, 1997 Anthropology and Human Movement: The Study of Dances. Lanham, MD.: Scarecrow Press.

York D., 2008 Medical Tourism: The Trend Toward Outsourcing Medical Procedures to Foreign Countries. Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions 28(2): 99–102.

# CHAPTER 29 VIRTUALITY
## *Placing the Virtual Body: Avatar, Chora, Cypherg*

*Tom Boellstorff*

### INTRODUCTION

What does it mean to have a body? How might virtual worlds transform understandings of the body, online but also offline? How might these virtual worlds also recall us to enduring conceptualizations and experiences of embodiment?

Bringing together my ethnographic research in the virtual world Second Life, anthropological work on embodiment, and a range of philosophical insights, my objective is to think toward a theory of the virtual body that responds to these questions. I push myself in this chapter to risk significant claims, but my argument is intentionally incomplete; I mean to contribute to a conversation rather than work in anything remotely resembling a mode of definitive closure. With this goal of setting up a provisional conceptual framework, vulnerable to ethnographic contextualization, I will emphasize that avatars are not merely representations of bodies but forms of embodiment, centered on constitutive emplacement within a world.

Thus, the key point I seek to advance is that virtual embodiment is always embodiment in a virtual place; as a result, the pluralization of place that virtual worlds entail holds foundational implications for online corporeality. (For the sake of synonyms, I will treat "virtual" and "online" as equivalent, as well as "embodiment" and "corporeality," though of course one could also develop rubrics in which these terms differed in meaning.) In working to make strange the Western cultural logics that have dominated the development and dissemination of virtual worlds, I seek an analytic of defamiliarization internal to that Western tradition. As I discuss briefly in the

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

conclusion, by historicizing and analytically unpacking the Western cultural logics that strongly shape contemporary virtual worlds I hope to contribute to analyses of how various forms of cybersociality further or undermine colonial, patriarchal, heterosexist, and capitalist hegemony. Rather than pursue the stubbornly elusive goal of transcending the binarisms of mind / body and culture / nature so embedded in this tradition, we can redirect the conversation by refracting these binarisms through a third binarism, virtual / actual. To advance my analysis of how this pivotal refraction pluralizes being-in-the-world, I will set forth three new concepts that I see as naming key aspects of dominant understandings of virtual embodiment: virtual chora, being-inworld, and the cypherg. By the latter part of this chapter, I will suggest that this theory of virtual embodiment implies a new understanding of the "digital" itself.

## *Avatar*'s Avatar

Given the time in which I write this chapter, almost any imaginable opening to the discussion must address the motion picture *Avatar*. Written and directed by James Cameron and employing groundbreaking visual effects, this film, first released in December 2009, had by April 2010 already become the highest-grossing work of artistic production in human history, having earned more than 2½ billion dollars. *Avatar's* plot, for which Cameron insisted on sole credit, recalls (a less generous verb would be "is derivative of") the storylines of films from *Pocahontas* to *Dances with Wolves* in its tale of a "native" race threatened by a technologically advanced colonizer, saved only when the protagonist, Jake Sully, a member of the colonizers, turns against them.

Cameron allegorized this colonial conflict, setting *Avatar* in the year 2154 and locating its humanoid "natives," the Na'vi, on Pandora, a jungle-like moon in the Alpha Centauri star system. In place of settler colonialism or missionizing, the narrative centers on corporate capitalism: humans have come to Pandora seeking a rare metal, and the Na'vi present little more than an ethical irritation, since mining the metal necessitates relocating them. The irritation is significant enough that the corporation has created "avatars," artificially grown bodies that look "native" but are in fact Na'vi / human hybrids. Each can be controlled only by the human whose DNA has been used to create a particular avatar (or by an identical twin of that person, as in the case of Jake Sully). These matched humans control their avatars by lying inside sensory deprivation chambers, outfitted with electronic equipment that allows them to remotely control the avatar bodies. Because Pandora's atmosphere is toxic to humans, they can live there only by using these avatars on the one hand, or by wearing gas masks or robotic exoskeletons on the other (these mutually exclusive possibilities will prove theoretically significant).

In three ways *Avatar* is surprisingly conservative in its portrayal of virtual corporeality. First, the film assumes a strict isomorphism between the virtual body and what I term the "actual" or "physical" body. (I never oppose "virtual" to "real;" such an opposition wrongly encodes presumptions that the online is not real, and that the real is technology-free.) Never in the film do we see Jake Sully operating an avatar other than his own, nor is there a plot twist revealing that some other person is controlling Jake Sully's avatar. Second, in the world of the film the destruction of an avatar does

not kill the human with which it is paired; fears of death apply only to human bodies. This is one of the strongest contrasts between *Avatar* and the best-known filmic representations of the virtual body that appeared before it, the *Matrix* trilogy (the first of which was released in 1999). In these movies, humans also go into sensory deprivation to control avatar bodies, but the death of an avatar body while under human control causes that human's death as well. Third, in *Avatar* the avatars are not online entities and are thus "virtual" only in a limited sense. In fact, the dénouement of the film occurs when the Na'vi are able to successfully transfer Jake Sully's consciousness into his (physical) avatar body, leaving his human body to die – the ultimate act of "going native" in the actual world, and one linked to fantasies of settler colonialism.

## Virtual Embodiment in Practice

To understand how *Avatar*'s understanding of embodiment differs from virtual corporeality, consider the meaning of "avatar" in the virtual world Second Life. At the time I write this chapter you can join Second Life for free, without providing any actual-world information about yourself; you create an account by making up a first name and choosing a last name from a predefined list. You then download and run the Second Life program (usually known as a "viewer" or "client") to enter the virtual world. In the language now standard across a range of virtual worlds, you are now "inworld," a term probably coined by Bruce Damer (Damer 1998). Once inside Second Life you find yourself in a virtual landscape built primarily by other residents and which can thus include anything from private homes to parks, from abandoned factories to glittering temples. These landscapes often have a rural feel to them – newcomers to Second Life often say it seems empty or abandoned. One reason for this is that to distribute server load, only a certain number of objects can be created or "rezzed" on a parcel of land. But as I discuss later, the predominant feel of Second Life as a countryside reveals something crucial about virtual embodiment.

Of course, a key aspect of virtual corporeality is the "avatar." Avatars in Second Life are almost limitlessly customizable. You can appear as any ethnicity or gender, and by rendering parts of your avatar body invisible, folding your avatar body upon itself, and attaching virtual objects, almost any imaginable embodiment is possible. Second Life residents have appeared as hundred-foot-tall dragons, two-foot tall baby animals, glowing balls of light, robots, enormous noses, walking trees, mermaids inside of fish tanks. Additionally, in Second Life (like many virtual worlds) it is possible to have more than one avatar (additional avatars are often known as "alternates," or "alts"). You can log off of one avatar's account and then log back in using a different account. By running two simultaneous instances of a Second Life viewer, being embodied by two avatars at once is feasible, as is having multiple actual-world people be embodied by a single avatar, either by taking turns or by collaboratively controlling the single avatar. The actual-world isomorphism between single person and single body can be transgressed in either direction, with significant consequences for virtual embodiment.

Residents do not always make use of these possibilities: most people, most of the time, have singular virtual embodiments that they see as resembling their actual-world embodiment, or that reflect dominant actual-world ideals of beauty and status. This often means light-skinned avatars, female avatars with large breasts, male avatars with

bulging biceps, and so on. However, even in such cases our critical impulse should not foreclose examining how such ostensibly normative embodiments may have different meanings and consequences online – not least because, for instance, the male avatar with bulging biceps may be female in the actual world.

Regardless of the form an avatar takes, a fundamental way in which it constitutes a kind of embodiment is as an anchor for subjectivity. It is common in Second Life (and a range of other virtual worlds and online games) to view one's avatar in a "third-person" perspective, such that you see your avatar from a slight remove, glancing over its shoulder so to speak. But it would be incorrect to construe such a perspective with being disembodied, for regardless of whether or not one is using a first-person perspective, a third-person perspective, or switches between them, the avatar is the locus of perception and sociality.

To succinctly illustrate some consequences of virtual embodiment, I will recount two stories chronicled by the Second Life journalist Wagner James Au. In the first, Au describes the story of CyFishy Traveler, a Second Life resident who created a female avatar, "Beginning Thursday," after a difficult romantic breakup in the actual world. CyFishy would sometimes run two instances of the Second Life viewer so he could embody the two avatars simultaneously. One day, feeling despondent about his lost romance, CyFishy moved the Beginning avatar up to his CyFishy avatar and "offered myself a hug." At that point, "Something shifted," as he puts it … Something moved him about that moment, so CyFishy did the next logical thing: "We started dating" …

> Their romance continued in Instant Message. "I would talk to myself, tell myself the things that I secretly wished a lover would say to me, assure myself that I am beautiful and loved … it's become a means to explore how to give myself the kind of love I was constantly seeking from outside of myself."
>
> But one last thing to note before you go: In [the physical world], CyFishy Traveler's owner is actually not male. "I'd shifted genders as an experiment and discovered the joys of having a hot guy to stare at any time I wanted to," explains CyFishy, who as it turns out, is just another woman imagining herself as a man imagining himself partnered to another woman who's really herself. (Au 2008a)

Another story Au recounts is that of Eshi Otawara, a Second Life resident whose actual-world husband, Glenn, died unexpectedly in 2006. In the wake of that tragedy:

> "I felt so powerless and alone," as she recalls, "that I told myself, 'You know, it might be a sick thing to do, a pathetic thing to do, whatever – but if I cannot have this guy in real life, I will MAKE him in Second Life" …
>
> … His widow re-created him as best she could – rather, Eshi Otawara remade herself, transforming her avatar to look like her husband. And when she was done remaking him, she took Glenn on a tour through Second Life …
>
> … "I get to do things with his pixel body that he'd be doing if he were alive," as she puts it. She even gave him a flat belly, something she'd known he'd wanted for some time. "I am sure he was cracking up in whatever form he exists now," she says …
>
> … I ask Eshi if she'd ever thought of turning Glenn into an "alt," a secondary avatar she could control from another computer, while Eshi remained in-world, as herself. That way, in a certain sense, they could be in Second Life together.

> "Yes I did," she tells me, then tears up. "It is a scary thought. It wouldn't be him and me … it would be me and me." (Au 2008b)

Both of these fascinating stories are, like *Avatar*, not completely indicative of everyday virtual-world embodiment. As a journalist, Au understandably focuses on the newsworthy, the exceptional, which can of course reveal broader cultural logics. The most atypical aspect of these stories is that they hinge on knowing about the actual-world lives of the persons in question, though Au did not attempt to independently verify these details. People CyFishy and Beginning would encounter during their Second Life dates would not know they were simultaneous embodiments of the same actual-world person unless CyFishy or Beginning volunteered that information. Nor would most residents know what when Eshi transformed her avatar into the form of an older (if flat-bellied) man, this virtual corporeality was meant to invoke Eshi's deceased husband.

At first glance these two stories appear opposed. The experiences of CyFishy and Beginning are predicated on a plural personhood experienced through simultaneous multiple virtual embodiment, but Eshi rejects this possibility: for her, this would be "just me and me." It would foreclose the alternating selfhood invoked by the term "alt" itself. Yet these two stories share a sense that in virtual worlds, the body becomes a multiplicity, a supernumerary site of subject-formation, a zone of possibility that lies across a distinct gap from actual-world embodiment. A shared agreement behind debate can also be seen in the following excerpt from one of many discussions about virtual embodiment I encountered during my ethnographic work in Second Life. I was sitting around one day with several other residents when someone asked if being inworld in Second Life constituted an "out-of-body experience." The following exchange ensued between persons I will name John, Susan, Roger, and Amy:

> *John*: I don't think it is an out-of-body experience per se. Since we are still "in our bodies" while looking at a monitor.
>
> *Susan*: John, I agree at one level, but do you never feel "embodied" in your avie [avatar]?
>
> *John*: No, I feel my avie is an extension of myself, but I see how it can happen for others.
>
> *Roger*: I think people do feel embodied – hence all the sexual activity with add-on genitals.
>
> *John*: My avie is an extension of my brain, but I don't feel embodied.
>
> *Amy*: We do a certain suspension of disbelief – that lets us shift into our Second Life looks.

It is not surprising that Eshi and CyFishy disagree on the meaning of multiple virtual bodies – or that my Second Life interlocutors disagree on virtual corporeality more generally, understanding such embodiment in terms ranging from "an extension of myself" or "an extension of my brain" to "our Second Life looks" or "feeling embodied" (thus showing that for some residents at least, "embodiment" is an emic term). No culture is ever univocal, and foundational cultural logics often appear in the background assumptions against which disagreement is intelligible as such. These

stories and conversations exemplify how aspects of virtual-world embodiment sometimes distill or even concretize what it means to be embodied in the actual world – recalling, for instance, how physical-world sociality is predicated on "the inherent multiplicity and indeterminacy of the body we have and are" (Van Wolputte 2004: 259). I cannot overemphasize the importance of understanding that the very real existence of a gap between virtual and actual does not mean they are sealed off from one another and should not inaugurate an asymptotic analysis where they end up "blurring." The ethnographic evidence indicates that the theoretical framework needed is not teleological but indexical. For virtual embodiment, but for all aspects of virtual culture as well, the gap between virtual and actual is constitutive of bidirectional meaning-making, value production, subjectivation, and social praxis.

## Theorizations of Embodiment

While even a remotely comprehensive review of literatures on embodiment is obviously beyond the scope of this chapter, questions of the body have certainly been central to human thought, harking back to the earliest written records and even prehistoric archeological data, particularly in regard to death and burial. It is not coincidental that "avatar," first used to refer to online bodies in the 1980s, is a Sanskrit term referring to the incarnation of a Hindu deity (Boellstorff 2008: 128). Despite the centrality of the body to biological anthropology and archeology (see Joyce 2005), in cultural anthropology it has held a rather odd position. On the one hand, many paradigms have de-emphasized or downplayed the centrality of embodiment to culture, indicative of an "intellectualist tendency to regard body praxis as secondary to verbal praxis" (Jackson 1989: 122). A result of these trends is that for many cultural anthropologists "the body, despite its ubiquity, has [been] … in effect simply 'bracketed' as a black box and set … aside" (Lock 1993: 133). Yet cultural anthropologists have also built up a broad literature on embodiment stretching back to the beginnings of the discipline (for overviews see Farnell 1999; Lock 1993; Reischer and Koo 2004; Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987; Van Wolputte 2004). This scholarship has shown how the body is produced, reproduced, and disciplined though contexts of culture and power (Martin 1992; Reischer and Koo 2004), and that as a result "the fact of our embodiment can be a valuable starting point for rethinking the nature of culture and our existential situation as cultural beings" (Csordas 1994: 6).

Embodiment has also been a longstanding concern in work on virtual worlds and internet-mediated sociality, even in the early days of non-graphical virtual worlds and their textual avatars (e.g., Argyle and Shields 1996; Balsamo 1996; Doyle 2009; Gee 2008; Heim 1995; Hillis 1999; Ihde 2002; Ito 1997; McRae 1997; Mitchell and Thurtle 2004; Nakamura 2007; Reid 1996; Stone 1991; Sundén 2003; Taylor 2002; Van Gelder 1991; White 2006; Yee and Bailenson 2007). Embodiment even inspired the first virtual world in the contemporary sense. In 1970, Myron Krueger and a colleague were working in different rooms but collaborating using cameras trained on their respective monitors, so that their hands appeared superimposed:

> As I moved my hand to point to the data my friend had just sent, the image of my hand briefly overlapped the image of his. He moved his hand … I was struck with the thought

> that he was uncomfortable about the image of my hand touching the image of his… Without saying anything, I subtly tested my hypothesis. Sure enough, as I moved the image of my hand towards his, he repeatedly, but unconsciously, moved the image of his hand to avoid contact (Krueger 1983: 12–127).

For Krueger, then, the pivotal moment in realizing virtual worlds were possible was a moment of virtual embodiment. Significantly for my later discussion, this moment of embodiment was a moment of two hands pointing toward each other (see Boellstorff 2008: 43–44 for further discussion of this historical period and an image of these pointing virtual hands nearly touching).

Feminist and queer work (among other communities of scholarship) has shown how white, male, heterosexual bodies often stand as paradigms for embodiment (e.g. Bordo 1993; Burlein 2005; Prosser 1998; Salamon 2006). In only an apparent paradox, such scholarship has also shown how in many cultural contexts "the body has been and still is closely associated with women and the feminine, whereas the mind remains associatively and implicitly connected to men and the masculine" (Grosz 1995: 32; see also Bigwood 1991; Probyn 1991). This attention to gender, race, and sexuality is crucial and I have addressed these topics in my work on virtual worlds as well as on sexuality and national belonging (e.g., Boellstorff 2005, 2007), but I have come to realize that the question of place must be central to any theory of the virtual body. I contend that virtual embodiment is always embodiment in a virtual place, and that this placeness of virtual worlds holds foundational implications for online corporeality.

## Virtual Chora

In previous research I have emphasized that virtual worlds are places (see Boellstorff 2008, chapter 4), as encapsulated in a telling prepositional distinction: in English you typically go "on" a website but "in" a virtual world. Richard Bartle, a pioneer in the design of virtual worlds, noted succinctly that "virtual worlds are not games. Even the ones written to *be* games aren't games. People can play games *in* them, sure, and they can be set up to that end, but this merely makes them venues. The Pasadena Rose Bowl is a stadium, not a game" (Bartle 2004: 475; emphasis in all quotations is in the original). In this sense it is "wrong to conceive of the virtual as a kind of indetermination, as a formless reservoir of possibilities that only actual beings identify" (Badiou 2000: 50; see Deleuze 2004).

I have also emphasized the importance of *techne* to virtual worlds. Briefly, Greek thought differentiated *episteme*, or knowledge, from techne, the root of "technology." Most translations of *techne* interpret it as meaning something like "art" or "craft;" Heidegger frames it as meaning as "to make something appear, within what is present, as this or that, in this way or that way" (Heidegger 2001 [1971]: 157). Heidegger's emphasis on "this or that," on what linguists would term an indexical relationship, underscores how techne introduces a gap between the way the world was before and after its application – in the way that, for instance, a simple tube made from a reed allows a person to breathe underwater, an ability the person would not have prior to the techne in question (this example is from Beniger 1986: 9; see Boellstorff 2008: 55). What makes virtual worlds distinctive – for, despite their antecedents, they

cannot be reduced to that which came before them – is that for the first time techne works not on the actual world, but upon a virtual world that is already the product of techne. Techne turns wood and ideas into a chair, but techne does not just turn ideas and silicon into a virtual world: techne becomes recursive and can also take place "inworld." This has consequences for how we theorize labor and value online, and offline as well (Ulmer 1994: 66).

To push further on this relationship between place and the virtual body, I will now link techne with another concept from ancient Greek philosophy: *chora*, a term best known from its centrality in *Timaeus*, one of Plato's late dialogues. Although philosophers have debated this term for two millennia, most would agree that in Plato's view chora is the basis of being, such that "forms come to be *in* it without ever being *of* it" (Sallis 1999: 109). Analogies Plato uses to illustrate chora include the wax upon which an image is stamped, the odorless oil used to make a perfume, and a mass of gold:

> That is modeled into all possible figures or shapes [for instance, a triangle … ] if someone were to point to one of the figures and ask what it *is*, the safest answer would be that it is gold; but as for the triangle and other figures formed from the gold, one should avoid speaking of them as being, since they are changing even while one is thus speaking [ … ] The gold is an image of that which receives all the fleeting images, an image of what Timaeus has called [chora] (Sallis 1999: 107–108).

One way to think about this triple relation between idea, chora, and thing is that of father, mother, and child (Ulmer 1994: 63–64), and indeed chora can connote receptacle, or even "the image of the nurse, a kind of surrogate mother who holds, aids, and succors the newly born child" (Sallis 1999: 99; see also Derrida 1990; Derrida and Eisenman 1997). A range of feminist thinkers have drawn upon this meaning of chora to develop feminist theories of embodiment (Bianchi 2006; Braziel 2006; Burchill 2006; Grosz 1995; Kristeva 1984; Margaroni 2005).

These theories are immensely valuable, but as Grosz admits, they sideline another set of meanings for chora (Grosz 1995: 112). Elsewhere in Plato's dialogues – and in ancient Greek society more generally – "chora" appears in statements like "Crete is not a level chora," or in debates over adapting the sport of horse racing to the nature of the chora (Sallis 1999: 116). In these contexts, the antonym of chora is *polis*, the city – and chora clearly means something like landscape, land, country, or simply "place," for "Plato never seems to abandon the reference to country or land expressed in ordinary uses of the term *chora*. Rather, he extrapolates from those meanings to form a technical usage in which *chora* expressed *shared space or common visual field*" (Ashbaugh 1988: 103). In fact, "*chora* stands out as the oldest Greek word for place, appearing in Homer and Hesiod" (Walter 1988: 120). Recall that Second Life and many other virtual worlds have a rural feel to them: with chora in mind, we might ask if there could be more to this sense of virtual world as countryside than the mere need to reduce server load.

If we go back even further, to the first written records in the *Iliad* of "*choron*" and "*choros*," which are linked to chora, we find that these terms "refer to both a dance and a dancing floor … we see here an emerging recognition that a precondition for activity is a place for it to occur, as dancing requires a dancing floor … the growing realization that place and making are conjoined" (Rickert 2007: 254). Chora was

distinguished from *topos*, also often translated as "place," in that chora is place made meaningful through the embodied human engagement of techne. For instance: "At the opening of Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* … [Antigone] tells Theseus that he will show him the *choros* where Oedipus must die, but warns Theseus not to reveal the *topoi* in which it lies. Here, *topos* stands for the mere location … of the sacred *choros*, the grave" (Walter 1988: 120).

Virtual worlds are thus chora recursively constituted through the work of techne itself, as if dancing bought a dancing-floor into being. Virtual worlds show the value in conceptualizing chora not in terms of topography, but in terms of choragraphy (see Ulmer 1994), or even a "choreography" of techne with chora. In an eerie anticipation of virtual worlds, Sallis summarized the effect of chora as follows: "[Chora] grants, furnishes, supplies an *abode* to all things … [chora], in which the phantoms come and go, is that other that secures the image in whatever trace of being it has … One could call it … a ghost scene that, enshrouding precisely in letting appear, endows the fleeting specters with whatever trace of being they might enjoy" (Sallis 1999: 122).

In 1985, Richard Mohr emphasized that Plato's analogy of gold was inadequate because gold is a thing of the actual world – a physicality – while in contrast the notion of chora does not entail:

> … viewing space as a material constituent out of which substances are created. Rather space is a medium or field in which phenomena appear as (non-substantial) images. If Plato had lived into [the twentieth] century, he might very well have chosen, not gold, but a movie screen or television screen as his analogue to a field across which ceaselessly changing non-substantial images may flicker. (Mohr 1985: 94)

Writing 25 years after this statement, I contend that had Plato lived into the 21st century, he might very well have chosen, not a movie screen, but a virtual world as analogue and exemplar of chora. Virtual worlds underscore how chora is not place per se, but place-making or worlding (Zhan 2009), the embodied "dance" of techne making possible "being-in-the-world." As this last term suggests, this reframing of chora links it to a phenomenology of the virtual body.

## Being-inworld: The Digital Relation

Pivotal to my theoretical framework is the phenomenological insight that embodiment, as part of being, is always "being-in-the-world," like a dancer on a dance floor. Embodiment is always emplacement, suggesting that there is more to the virtual body than avatars: as in the actual world, the virtual body is always a " 'spatial body' … produced and … the production of space … [and] immediately subject to the determinants of that space" (Lefebvre 1991: 195). Virtual body and virtual world constitute each other, recalling the broader phenomenological conclusion that "the body can no longer be regarded as an entity to be examined in its own right but has to be placed in the context of a world" (Macaan 1993: 174). The notion of being-in-the-world has been used to examine human–computer interaction in the actual world (e.g., Dourish 2004), and its productive utility extends to virtual contexts. It may not be coincidental that going back to "Videoplace" and "Habitat," and continuing through "World of

Warcraft," "There," and "Free Realms," the names of many virtual worlds have emphasized place rather than avatars: we can transform the idea of "being-in-the-world" to "being-in-the-virtual-world" or just "being-inworld." This crucial pluralization of worlding underscores how virtual embodiment cannot be understood apart from its manifestation in specific virtual worlds, though of course we will discover commonalities between virtual worlds as well as differences.

The centrality of world to embodiment has been a common theme of phenomenological thinking. Husserl's notion of the "life-world," for instance, highlights "the intersubjective, mundane world of background understandings and experiences of the world" (Dourish 2004: 106), which can now include a set of background understandings and experiences about virtual worlds. Merleau-Ponty approached this question of co-constitution of body and world though his notion of "flesh," through which distinctions like body versus world were "redefined as relational, intertwined and reversible aspects of a single fabric. [He] uses the term the flesh to designate this fabric. And he refers to both the flesh of the body … and the flesh of the world … The perceiving subject, from this point of view, forms part of the visible world" (Crossley 1995: 47; see also Leder 1990). We may thus think of virtual flesh as the intertwined fabric, emerging from virtual chora, that forms a shared fabric of virtual embodiment and virtual world.

Indeed, the key way that *Avatar* accurately represented virtual corporeality was its identification of emplacement as essential to embodiment. As noted earlier, this took one of two mutually exclusive modalities on Pandora: humans had to embody using either Na'vi avatars or some combination of masks and robotic exoskeletons. This neatly sums up the difference between the avatar and the "cyborg," a now-classic future in science and technology studies (Haraway 1991). In distinction to the still-earlier figure of the android (a robotic approximation of the human body), the cyborg is part human and part machine – predicated on relationships of interpenetration and attachment, as in the prosthetic relationship between artificial hand and severed arm. In contrast, the avatar is based upon a gap – there is a clear and ontologically foundational gap between Jake Sully's avatar body and Jake Sully's actual-world body in a control pod, just as there is a clear and ontologically foundational gap between an avatar and an actual-world person, and between any virtual world and the actual world. Ideas, metaphors, power relations, and even forms of materiality routinely move across this gap between the virtual and actual, but it is the gap and attendant movements across it – works of techne – that make the virtual possible at all. It is instructive to consider the prosthetic relationship between artificial hand and severed arm in light of Merleau-Ponty's ruminations on phantom limbs:

> To have a phantom arm is to remain open to all the actions of which the arm alone is capable; it is to retain the practical field which one enjoyed before mutilation. The body is the vehicle of being in the world, and having a body is, for a living creature, to be intervolved in a definite environment, to identify oneself with certain projects and be continually committed to them. (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 81–82)

Merleau-Ponty here emphasized how embodiment involves "action" in a "practical field." The body is constitutive of being-in-the-world, a "definite environment" of projects, of techne, and a changed body can retain a memory of the "definite

environment" before the change (for instance, via the phenomenon of a phantom limb). We do not know how Merleau-Ponty might have revised his understanding of phantom limbs were the idea of avatar limbs available to him. However, it seems possible that his rethinking would include how virtual bodies, limbs and all, make possible human action in the "definite environment" of a virtual world, and how being-inworld thus enables new possibilities for corporeality.

Embodiment as emplacement involves what Heidegger termed "dwelling." For Heidegger – for whom only one world, the earth, was thinkable – "to be a human being means to be on the earth as a mortal. It means to dwell" (Heidegger 2001 [1971]: 145). Heidegger noted that the Old German and Old English term *buan*, meaning "to build or dwell" and still discernible in the modern English term "neighbor" (near-dweller), is also the root of the modern German copula *Ich bin*, I am, I exist. To exist is to dwell in a place and to draw upon techne in order to participate in the building of that place: "being-in-the-world … has to be understood in terms of tasks, actions to be accomplished, a free space which outlines in advance the possibilities available to the body at any time" (Macaan 1993: 174). This is why Merleau-Ponty regarded embodiment not as "a thing in objective space, but as a system of possible actions, a virtual body with its phenomenal 'place' defined by its task and situation. My body is wherever there is something to be done" (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 250). Until January 2005, in Second Life the amount of time an avatar spent in a location was in fact termed "dwell" (Boellstorff 2008: 95), and notions of dwelling remain central to notions of virtual embodiment in Second Life and beyond.

It is helpful to think about this dwelling-relationship between embodiment and place in terms of indexicality. When Heidegger referred to techne as making something appear "as this or that, in this way or that way," he emphasized an indexicality, a relation of pointing, that lies behind the mutually constitutive being of body and world. This indexical relation of making something appear "as this or that" is predicated on chora: it links chora to techne. In this regard Plato's analogy of chora to gold is telling because:

> that analogy tells us that whenever we observe objects regularly exchanging their look or their shape, we cannot call those things *this* or *that* if we wish to remain close to the truth. But if … something remains constant throughout the change, we can rightly say that the enduring item deserves both the fixed reference of the definite indicative pronouns and a specific name [chora]. (Ashbaugh 1988: 115).

This indexical relation is emergent in the relation between actual bodies and their emplacement in landscapes of perception and sociality: "the forms of the landscape – like the identities and capacities of its human inhabitants – are not imposed upon a material substrate but rather emerge as condensations or crystallizations of activity within a relational field" (Ingold 2004: 333).

In my prior work, I have noted that oftentimes "digital" (as in some uses of "digital media") does little more than stand in for "computational" or "electronic" (Boellstorff 2008: 18). However, a very different approach would begin by noting that the etymologies of digit as "finger" and index as "forefinger" converge on a relation of pointing that draws together "digit-al" and "index-ical." Invoking Heidegger's indexical understanding of techne, the digital might be said to "point to" virtual

embodiment as being-inworld – as made possible by the "digit-al" gap. This recalls the gap between 0 and 1 in digital binary code, or the gap between the fingers of God and Adam that in Michelangelo's famous Sistine Chapel painting marks the moment of the human body's creation.

Because virtual worlds allow techne to become recursive, virtual embodiment is digital in the sense that it enables indexicality within virtual worlds: it allows the digital to "point at" itself. Indeed, there is a striking difference between the Sistine Chapel image and Krueger's drawing of his virtual hand pointing at his colleague's virtual hand in 1970. Both images feature a constitutive gap between two pointing hands, but in comparison to a creator / created hierarchy, with God above and Adam sitting below, Krueger's image shows an act of recursive creation – the fingers point at each other in a mutually constitutive circle – recalling not Michelangelo so much as the famous Escher drawing of two hands drawing each other into being. Indexicality provides a different way of understanding the digital relation with regard to the virtual body.

In developing this line of analysis, I have found it illuminating to turn to the phenomenologist Karl Jaspers's notion of the cypher, an "objectivity which is permeated by subjectivity and in such a way that Being becomes present in the whole" (Jaspers 1959: 35). Derived from the Arabic word for "zero" – the binary "0" to the pointing "1" of the digit – the originary meaning of "cypher" is "an arithmetical symbol or character of no value by itself, but which increases or decreases the value of other figures according to its position" (OED 2010). In other words, its value is not symbolic – predicated on signifying meaning – but indexical, predicated on positionality and pointing. Extended meanings include "a person who fills a place, but is of no importance or worth, a nonentity, a 'mere nothing,'" and "an intertexture of letters, esp. the initials of a name, engraved or stamped on plate, linen" (OED 2010). Recall how one image of chora provided by Plato is "a mass of wax or other soft material on which the imprint of a seal can be made" (Sallis 1999: 108). In a virtual-world context, to "fill a place" is the effect of a virtual body's being-inworld. If virtual worlds can be considered instances of "the world of the cyphers" (Jaspers 1959: 49), then the avatarized subject of that being-inworld would be not the cyborg, but the "cypherg." The cypherg is virtual corporeality through which "a *participation* in Being takes place" (Jaspers 1959: 61), a participation through techne that makes possible the conditions for emplaced being itself. A recursive indexicality, made possible by the pluralization of being-inworld, is quite literally the "point" of the virtual body.

## Conclusions: Politics of Virtual Embodiment

In this chapter, I have sought to develop a theory of the virtual body that links (1) ethnographic insights from prior work by myself and other scholars with (2) a theoretical architecture drawing from a range of philosophical perspectives and (3) the introduction of three new concepts: virtual chora, being-inworld, and the cypherg. Given limits of space and scope, my argument is clearly provisional and heuristic, intended to suggest directions for ethnographic inquiry. A blockbuster movie like *Avatar* may grab headlines for a few years, but it is through everyday online practices that new virtual embodiments will emerge.

Over a hundred million persons already participate in virtual worlds: future research will be crucial to understand differing and shared ways that these virtual worlds effect actual-world socialities, as they increasingly imbricate with them in a staggering range of indexical relationships. One fascinating issue involves the question of how the pluralization of worlding offered by being-inworld might act as a form of internal destabilization, challenging the Western cultural logics of place and embodiment that I have worked to trace and defamiliarize in this chapter.

In addition, the growth of virtual worlds raises new possibilities for non-Western critiques and transformations of virtual embodiment. As the notion of "avatar" suggests, non-Western genealogies of embodiment have shaped virtual worlds since their beginnings, but these are clearly minor influences in the context of a dominant Western (indeed, American and even Californian) ideology of the virtual (Barbrook and Cameron 2001). In analyzing how indigenous persons of North and South America have understood embodiment, Viveiros de Castro notes that "the Amerindian emphasis on the social construction of the body cannot be taken as the culturalization of a natural substract but rather as the production of a distinctly human body, meaning *naturally* human" (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 480). Such a notion of the human body as a production of nature through social engagement would offer just one of many possible alternative genealogies of virtual embodiment.

Developing our ethnographic and theoretical understandings of the virtual body can thus provide powerful new ways of apprehending not just virtual worlds, but also how "the computer and the worlds it generates reveal that the world in which we live, the [actual] world, has always been a space of virtuality" (Grosz 2001: 78). The virtual body can teach us about actual-world embodiment. For instance, for Merleau-Ponty bodily movement "superimposes upon physical space a virtual or human space" (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 111). But when virtual bodies and virtual worlds enter the picture, the verb "superimpose" becomes inadequate for capturing reconfigurations of "world" and thus of ethnographic fieldsite. Might some anthropologists find treating virtual worlds as fieldsites unsettling not so much because of their virtuality, but because of their corollary ability to destabilize notions of physical place, radically demonstrating the cultural constitution of the "fieldsite" (Gupta and Ferguson 1997)? In this sense "it is interesting that at just about the time the last of the untouched 'real-world' anthropological field sites are disappearing, a new and unexpected kind of 'field' is opening up incontrovertibly social spaces in which people still meet face-to-face, but under new definitions of both 'meet' and 'face' " (Stone 1991: 85).

For anthropologists and others interested in culture, the great advantage of a phenomenological approach to the virtual body is that it highlights how new possibilities exist for embodiment when it is not just culture that can be multiple, but the world as well, for "the notion of the virtual … provid[es] a new way of thinking *multiplicity*" (Ansell Pearson 2002: 4). This opens up new possibilities for forms of multinaturalism (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 472) that can reconfigure the multiculturalist logics of inclusion and belonging that typify much contemporary anthropological thinking. Where Merleau-Ponty stated that "consciousness projects itself into a physical world and has a body, as it projects itself into a cultural world and has its habits" (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 137), I would argue that being-inworld productively reframes this distinction between physical and cultural worlds. It does so by making acts of projection constitutive of worlds as well as bodies: the virtual body provides crucial clues to

cultural practices of worlding. Too often, only the first term of the phrase "virtual world" receives theoretical and ethnographic attention; only by deepening our understanding of "world" can we truly understand virtual embodiment and virtual worlds more generally.

This has political consequences, because it suggests that an attention to the politics of placemaking may have crucial consequences for virtual embodiment. My theoretically informed hunch is that what might at first seem to be marginally relevant topics like virtual terraforming, property, building, and commodities are crucial to the politics of the virtual body. Many critics of Heidegger, particularly Levinas, emphasized how "thinking in terms of visualizable totalities necessarily leads to totalitarian ways of acting" (Keyes 1972: 122). In other words, the idea of being-in-a-singular-world shapes a totalitarian understanding of selfhood and society. In contrast, virtual worlds pluralize being-in-the-world. Since no one lives 24 hours a day in a single virtual world without any form of actual-world sociality, and few persons participate in only one virtual world (many of which take the form of online games), being-inworld is always a form of being-in-multiplicity. This opens possibilities for internal and external reconfigurations of Western ontologies of place, body, and the social (and thus new deconstructions of the internal / external dichotomy itself).

Any truly anthropological approach to embodiment "begins from the methodological postulate that the body is not an *object* to be studied in relation to culture, but is to be considered as the *subject* of culture, or in other words as the existential ground of culture" (Csordas 1988: 5). The fascinating, possibly revolutionary potential of virtual worlds for embodiment lies in how virtual corporeality co-grounds culture with a being-inworld founded in new pluralizations of place and sociality. From virtual chora emerges the cypherg, a figure of online corporeality, a figure whose recursively indexical being-inworld stands to fundamentally reconfigure what it means to be human – even while drawing upon and even concretizing longstanding notions of the human. To what new possibilities does placing the virtual body "point?" At stake is nothing less than the "the digital" itself.

## Acknowledgments

I thank Fran Mascia-Lees for her encouragement in writing this chapter. I thank as well my interlocutors and colleagues in Second Life and at the University of California, Irvine for their inspiration and support. Early versions of this article were presented at the Institute for Advanced Study, University of Minnesota (March 2010), the Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto (April 2010), and the Society for Cultural Anthropology Conference (May 2010). I thank the organizers and attendees of those events for their helpful comments.

## REFERENCES

Ansell Pearson, Keith, 2002 Philosophy and the Adventure of the Virtual: Bergson and the Time of Life. London: Routledge.

Argyle, Katie, and Rob Shields, 1996 Is there a Body on the Net? *In* Cultures of Internet: Virtual Spaces, Real Histories, Living Bodies. Rob Shields, ed. pp. 58–69. London: Sage.

Ashbaugh, Anne Freire, 1988 Plato's Theory of Explanation: A Study of the Cosmological Account in the *Timaeus*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Au, Wagner James, 2008a Friday's Traveler: The Avatar Who Loved Himself. New World Notes, <http://nwn.blogs.com/nwn/2008/06/thursdays-trave.html>, accessed February 28, 2010.

Au, Wagner James, 2008b The Husband That Eshi Made. New World Notes, <http://nwn.blogs.com/nwn/2008/05/the-husband-tha.html>, accessed February 28, 2010.

Badiou, Alain, 2000 Deleuze: The Clamor of Being. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Balsamo, Anne, 1996 Technologies of the Gendered Body: Reading Cyborg Women. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Barbrook, Richard, and Andy Cameron, 2001 Californian Ideology. *In* Crypto Anarchy, Cyberstates, and Pirate Utopias. ed. Peter Ludlow. pp. 363–387. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Bartle, Richard A., 2004 Designing Virtual Worlds. Indianapolis: New Riders.

Beniger, James R., 1986 The Control Revolution: Technological and Economic Origins of the Information Society. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bianchi, Emanuela, 2006 Receptacle/Chora: Figuring the Errant Feminine in Plato's Timaeus. Hypatia 21(4): 124–146.

Bigwood, Carol, 1991 Renaturalizing the Body (With the Help of Merleau-Ponty). Hypatia 6(3): 54–73.

Boellstorff, Tom, 2005 The Gay Archipelago: Sexuality and Nation in Indonesia. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Boellstorff, Tom, 2007 A Coincidence of Desires: Anthropology, Queer Studies, Indonesia. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Boellstorff, Tom, 2008 Coming of Age in Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Bordo, Susan, 1993 Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Braziel, Jana Evans, 2006 Being and Time, Non-Being and Space…(Introductory Notes Toward an Ontological Study of "Woman" and Chora). *In* Belief, Bodies, and Being: Feminist Reflections on Embodiment. Deborah Orr, Linda López Mcallister, Eileen Kahl, and Kathleen Earle, eds. pp. 103–125. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield.

Burchill, Louise, 2006 Resituating the Feminine in Contemporary French Philosophy. *In* Belief, Bodies, and Being: Feminist Reflections on Embodiment. eds. Deborah Orr, Linda López Mcallister, Eileen Kahl, and Kathleen Earle. pp. 81–102. Oxford: Rowan & Littlefield.

Burlein, Ann, 2005 The Productive Power of Ambiguity: Rethinking Homosexuality through the Virtual and Developmental Systems Theory. Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy 20(1): 21–53.

Crossley, Nick, 1995 Merleau-Ponty, the Elusive Body and Carnal Sociology. Body & Society 1(1): 43–63.

Csordas, Thomas J., 1988 Embodiment as a Paradigm for Anthropology. Ethos 18(1): 5–47.

Csordas, Thomas J., 1994 Introduction: the Body as Representation and Being-in-the-world. *In* Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self. ed. Thomas J. Csordas. pp. 1–24. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Damer, Bruce, 1998 Avatars! Exploring and Building Virtual Worlds on the Internet. Berkeley: Peachpit Press.

Deleuze, Gilles, 2004 Difference and Repetition. London: Continuum.

Derrida, Jacques, 1990 A Letter to Peter Eisenman. Assemblage 12: 6–13.

Derrida, Jacques, and Peter Eisenman, 1997 Chora L Works. New York: The Monacelli Press.

Dourish, Paul, 2004 Where the Action Is: The Foundations of Embodied Interaction. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Doyle, Denise, 2009 The Body of the Avatar: Rethinking the Mind-body Relationship in Virtual Worlds. Journal of Gaming and Virtual Worlds 1(2): 131–141.

Farnell, B., 1999 Moving Bodies, Acting Selves. Annual Review of Anthropology 28: 341–73.

Gee, James Paul, 2008 Video Games and Embodiment. Games and Culture 3(3 / 4): 253–263.

Grosz, Elizabeth, 1995 Women, Chora, Dwelling. *In* her Space, Time and Perversion: Essays on the Politics of Bodies. pp. 111–124. London: Routledge.

Grosz, Elizabeth 2001 Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Gupta, Akhil, and James Ferguson, 1997 Discipline and Practice: "The Field" as Site, Method, and Location in Anthropology. *In* Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field Science. Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, eds. pp. 1–46. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Haraway, Donna J., 1991 A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-feminism in the Late Twentieth Century. *In* Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature. Donna J. Haraway, ed. pp. 149–82. London: Routledge.

Heidegger, Martin, 2001 [1971] Building Dwelling Thinking. *In* Poetry, Language, Thought. pp. 143–159. New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics.

Heim, Michael, 1995 The Design of Virtual Reality. *In* Cyberspace / Cyberbodies / Cyberpunk: Cultures of Technological Embodiment. Mike Featherstone and Roger Burrows, eds. pp. 65–77. London: Sage.

Hillis, Ken, 1999 Digital Sensations: Space, Identity, and Embodiment in Virtual Reality. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Ihde, Don, 2002 Bodies in Technology. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Ingold, Tim, 2004 Culture on the Ground: The World Perceived Through the Feet. Journal of Material Culture 9(3): 315–340.

Ito, Mizuko, 1997 Virtually Embodied: The Reality of Fantasy in a Multi-User Dungeon. *In* Internet Culture. David Porter, ed. pp. 87–109. New York: Routledge.

Jackson, Michael, 1989 Paths toward a Clearing: Radical Empiricism and Ethnographic Inquiry. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Jaspers, Karl, 1959 Truth and Symbol. Translated and with an Introduction by Jean T. Wilde, William Kluback, and William Kimmel. Albany: NCUP, Inc.

Joyce, Rosemary, 2005 Archaeology of the Body. Annual Review of Anthropology 34: 139–158.

Keyes, C. D., 1972 An Evaluation of Levinas' Critique of Heidegger. Research in Phenomenology 2: 121–142.

Kristeva, Julia, 1984 Revolution in Poetic Language. New York: Columbia University Press.

Krueger, Myron W., 1983 Artificial Reality. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Leder, Drew, 1990 Flesh and Blood: A Proposed Supplement to Merleau-Ponty. Human Studies 13: 209–219.

Lefebvre, Henri, 1991 The Production of Space. Donald Nicholson-Smith, trans. Oxford: Blackwell.

Lock, Margaret, 1993 Cultivating the Body: Anthropology and Epistemologies of Bodily Practice and Knowledge. Annual Review of Anthropology 22: 133–155.

Macaan, Christopher, 1993 Four Phenomenological Philosophers: Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty. London: Routledge.

Margaroni, Maria, 2005 "The Lost Foundation": Kristeva's Semiotic *Chora* and Its Ambiguous Legacy. Hypatia 20(1): 78–98.

Martin, Emily, 1992 The End of the Body? American Ethnologist 19(1): 121–140.

McRae, Shannon, 1997 Flesh Made Word: Sex, Text, and the Virtual Body. *In* Internet Culture. David Porter, ed. pp. 73–86. New York: Routledge.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 1962 Phenomenology of Perception. New York: Humanities Press.

Mitchell, Robert and Phillip Thurtle, ed., 2004 Data Made Flesh: Embodying Information. New York: Routledge.

Mohr, Richard, 1985 The Platonic Cosmology. Leiden: E. J. Brill.

Nakamura, Lisa, 2007 Digitizing Race: Visual Cultures of the Internet. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Oxford English Dictionary online, 2010 "Cypher." <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/50040044?single=1&query_type=word&queryword=cypher&first=1&max_to_show=10>, accessed March 15, 2010.

Probyn, Elspeth, 1991 This Body Which Is Not One: Speaking an Embodied Self. Hypatia 6(3): 111–124.

Prosser, Jay, 1998 Second Skins: The Body Narratives of Transsexuality. New York: Columbia University Press.

Reid, Elizabeth M., 1996 Text-based Virtual Realities: Identity and the Cyborg Body. *In* High Noon on the Electronic Frontier: Conceptual Issues in Cyberspace. Peter Ludlow, ed. pp. 327–345. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.

Reischer, Erica, and Kathryn S. Koo, 2004 The Body Beautiful: Symbolism and Agency in the Social World. Annual Review of Anthropology 33: 297–317.

Rickert, Thomas, 2007 Toward the *Chōra*: Kristeva, Derrida, and Ulmer on Emplaced Invention. Philosophy and Rhetoric 40(3): 251–273.

Salamon, Gayle, 2006 Boys of the Lex: Transgenderism and Rhetorics of Materiality. GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies 12(4): 575–97.

Sallis, John, 1999 Chorology: On Beginning in Plato's *Timaeus*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, and Margaret Lock, 1987 The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work in Medical Anthropology. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 1(1): 6–41.

Stone, Allucquère Rosanne, 1991 Will the Real Body Please Stand Up? *In* Cyberspace: First Steps, Michael Benedikt, ed. pp. 81–118.

Sundén, Jenny, 2003 Material Virtualities: Approaching Online Textual Embodiment. New York: Peter Lang.

Taylor, T. L., 2002 Living Digitally: Embodiment in Virtual Worlds. *In* The Social Life of Avatars: Presence and Interaction in Shared Virtual Environments, Ralph Schroeder, ed. pp. 40–62. London: Springer-Verlag.

Ulmer, Gregory, 1994 Heuretics: The Logic of Invention. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Van Gelder, Lindsey, 1991 [1985] The Strange Case of the Electronic Lover. *In* Computerization and Controversy: Value Conflicts and Social Choices. Charles Dunlop and Rob Kling, eds. pp. 364–375. Boston: Academic Press.

Van Wolputte, Steven, 2004 Hang On to Your Self: Of Bodies, Embodiment, and Selves. Annual Review of Anthropology 33: 251–69.

Viveiros de Castro, Eduardo, 1998 Cosmological Deixis and Amerindian Perspectivism. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 4(3): 469–488.

Walter, Eugene Victor, 1988 Placeways: A Theory of the Human Environment. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

White, Michele, 2006 The Body and the Screen: Theories of Internet Spectatorship. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Yee, Nick and Jeremy Bailenson, 2007 The Proteus Effect: The Effect of Transformed Self-Representation on Behavior. Human Communication Research 33: 271–290.

Zhan, Mei, 2009 Other-Worldly: Making Chinese Medicine through Transnational Frames. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

# Index

abortion 321, 328–9, 345, 406–8, 413–15
  genomics 226, 227, 229
  post–socialism reproduction 403–11, 413–16
acting hard 24–5, 29, 42–3
Adorno, Theodore 4–5
advertising 320–22, 324–32
  *Next Generation* (Ford) 320–21, 325–32
aesthetics 1, 3–21
  embodiment 7–9, 19–20
  ethnography 14–19
  ideology 11–14
affect 2, 239–40, 242, 248–9
  racial learning 24–43
affective labor 364–7
  neoliberalism 354–5, 356–60, 363–7
African-Americans 50, 182
  racial learning and affect 24–5, 28–32, 35–42
  racialization 419, 422, 423, 424–5, 426
agency 1, 389, 482, 483, 488
  chronic fatigue 150
  elementary structures 138–43, 147
  experimental 243, 246–9, 250
  genomics 224–5, 227, 230
  phantom limbs 149–50
Alder Hey Hospital (Liverpool) 189–90
Alzheimer disease (AD) 234–6, 473–7
American dream 14, 27, 29–30
amniocentesis 227
amputation 175–6
  *see also* phantom limbs
Anderson, Benedict 87, 90, 91, 95
anemia 468
animal activists 266, 267
animate organisms 146
animism 103
Anlo–Ewe people 442–4, 461
anthropologizing 55–6
anthropology 1–2, 172–201, 279–80
  autoethnography 46–7
  bioethics 73
  bodies in motion 481–4
  body modifications 340
  embodiment 388–9, 397, 398
  fetal bodies 322–3, 324
  hybridity 263, 264, 269, 272
  kinship 292, 299, 304, 305
  pain 370–71, 372, 375, 377, 382–3
  race 421, 429, 431
  senses 437–9, 440–44, 446–7
  sensorial memory 452
  tasting food 467, 469, 478
  transgender 208–9
  virtuality 509, 516
Aristotle 341, 343, 400, 435
Arts and Crafts Movement 6, 7–8, 11–20
  revival 9–11, 16
ascription 422–5, 431
assisted reproduction technologies (ARTs) 312–13
  kinship 293, 302, 305
  masculinities 308, 310, 312–13, 317, 318
Au, Wagner James 507–8

*A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Edition.
Edited by Frances E. Mascia-Lees.
© 2011 Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Published 2011 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

autobiographies 46–7
autoethnography 46–70
autopsy 185–93
*Avatar* (movie) 505–6, 508, 513, 515
avatars 389, 399, 504–8, 509, 513–14, 516
Azande people 442

Baden, Michael 182–3, 184
*bakla* 209
Baumgarten, Alexander 3
beauty 7, 8, 11, 14–15, 16, 19
being-in-the-world, being-inworld 505, 512–15, 516, 517
Benjamin, Walter 4–5, 8, 13
Bentham, Jeremy 372
bestiality 342
Biehl, Ay 185
biocapital 266, 269–70
bioengineers 240, 241, 266
bioethics 72–84, 262–3, 264, 323
biomedicine 445–6, 467, 484–7
  pain 370–71, 372, 374, 377–9, 383
biopiracy 193–6
biopolitics 87–8, 90–91, 93, 97–9, 152, 425
  colonialism 120, 122–9, 132
  deaths on Mexican border 159–60
  genomics 226
  reproduction 408–13, 415–16
biopower 86–99, 160, 349
biopsychosocial approach 373, 380–81
biosociality 263, 264–5, 268
blackness 38–42
  racial learning 25, 28–32, 34–43
blogging 94–5
blood 105–6
bodiliness 102–17, 119, 137–8, 147–9
body and bodies 1–2
  adornment 10–15, 106–8, 111–14, 339
  animal modifications 345–9
  as patient 74, 80–83
  as specimen 74–7
  as spectacle 74, 77–80
  bioethics 72–84
  colonialism in Sudan 124–7, 130–2
  controlling animals 349–50
  death on Mexican border 157–70
  dissection 172–201
  fetal 320–33
  illness 149–52
  impairment 276–89
  in motion 481–99
  incorruptibility 181–3
  material content 103–6
  microcosm 108–11
  mindfulness 396–7
  modifications 338–50
  organ harvesting 186–93
  pain 370–83
  personhood 388–90
  racial learning and affect 26–7, 29, 38
  racialization 419–31
  rationalized 184–5
  repatriation 196–201
  ritual 111–16
  senses 435
  sensing 287–8
  sensorial memory 454, 455–8
  social 104–5, 106–8
  spirit 103–5, 115–17
  tasting food 467–78
  tombois 209–10, 211–21
  trafficking 193–6
  virtuality 504–17
  world relations 137–43, 149–54
body–in–action–in–context 73, 83
body–love 175, 178–80
body painting 339
Booker, Cory 30
Bourdieu, Pierre 4, 10
  bodies in motion 482
  embodiment 138, 140–43
  habitus 27, 29, 38, 138, 140–42, 176, 250, 282–4, 393, 430
  illness 81
  power relations 142
  ritual practice 68
  sport 279, 282–3, 284–6
  structuring structures 39
  tombois 213
brain imaging 76, 372, 375, 383
breast cancer 228–9
bungalows 14

Cabrini, Mother 184
camp 55, 56–9
  autoethnography 52–60, 64–8
  politics 61–2
capitalism 2, 3–20, 39
  fetal bodies 321, 322, 325
  neoliberalism 355, 357, 359–61, 364, 366
cars 320–21, 324–32
  Altea 328
  Ford 320–21, 325–30
  Volvo 324, 325, 330
Cashinahua people 436
castration 339, 348
cats 346–7, 348, 349
cell biologist (Dan) 240–44, 249, 250–52, 253–6, 258
Central American Free Trade Association (CAFTA) 298
cerebral palsy 278, 287, 289

childbirth in Sudan 125, 126, 127–8, 131
chimeras 267
Chinese medicine 445
Chirac, President Jacques 427
chora 505, 510–12, 514, 515, 517
chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) 149, 150–51, 153–4
chronic pain 81–2, 371, 375, 376–80, 381–3
Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) 129–30
circumcision 124–32
  pharaonic 124–32
  sunna 131
class 50, 89, 360–61, 444, 446
  aesthetics 4, 10, 11, 13–14
  neoliberalism 354–6, 359, 360–61, 362–3, 366
  racial learning and affect 28, 30, 33, 38, 43
  racialization 428, 429, 430
clitoridectomy 124, 131
cloning 348–9
cognition 389–93, 396
cognitive-behavioral medicine 376
colonialism 2, 26, 47, 90, 119–32
  *Avatar* 505–6
  neoliberalism 359, 360
commemorative practices 454
communication 73, 89, 91, 92–5, 98
Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) 445–6
Computerized Active Visualization Environment (CAVE) 240, 245–7, 254, 256–8
conjoined twins 77–9, 342
contraception 409, 411–13, 416
Cooke, Alistair 190–93, 200–201
corporeality 137–8
  components 147–9
  *see also* embodiment
cosmos 389–90, 398, 401
  Kayapo 102–3, 108–11, 112, 114–17
critical psychology 452
Cross–Domain Analogical Thinking (CAT) 396
cultural phenomenology 246, 249, 250, 258
culture 46–7, 360–64, 446–7
  aesthetics 4–7, 9–10
  bioethics 74, 76–7, 81
  biopower 90–91
  bodiliness 104, 106, 111–12, 114
  body modifications 338–9, 340–43, 345, 349
  fetal bodies 323, 325
  gay community 54–6, 63
  human–animal border 340–43
  masculinities 307–10
  neoliberalism 355, 356, 359, 360–64, 367
  pain 372, 377, 379, 382–3
  personhood 388–9, 391, 393, 395–401
  phenomenology 137–54
  racial learning and affect 26–7, 34, 36–8, 40–41
  racialization 424, 430
  reproduction 404, 407–8, 415
  senses 435–9, 440–44, 446–7
  sensorial memory 453, 461
  sport and impairment 279, 282–3, 285–6, 289
  tasting food 467
  tombois 211, 217–20
  transgender embodiment 207–9
  transnationalism 486, 488
  virtuality 504–5, 508, 509–10, 516–17
  xenotransplantation 267, 268, 271
Cuna people 441
cyberpolitics 92, 93–9
cyberpower 91–3
cybersociality 505, 509, 516
cyborg 513
CyFishy Traveler (Second Life) 507, 508
cypher 515
cypherg 505, 515, 517

Darwin, Charles 225, 342–3, 346, 442
death 172–201
  bodiliness 104, 107, 110, 115–16
  children 174–5, 189–90
  display of dead bodies 161–6
  Mexican border 157–70
  organ harvesting 186–93
  repatriation of remains 158–9, 161, 166–70, 196–201
  resurrection 179, 180, 181, 193
  rituals 173–4, 178–80
  Yahi Indians 173, 196–7
de Beauvoir, Simone 145
deformity 74, 77–80
dementia 234–6
  tasting food 473–7
deobjectification 102, 115, 117
depression 28–31
Desana people 441
Descartes, Rene 231, 284, 343, 388
developmental systems theory (DST) 232
deVries, Diane 176
diabetes 294, 295, 298, 300, 303–4
Didion, Joan 172–3
Diogenes 435
disablism 288–9
disability 227, 287, 288–9, 342
  *see also* impairment
discipline 281–2
disgust 476–7, 478
divination 389, 391, 395–6
DNA 225–6, 230, 232–4, 236
dogs 346–7, 348, 349
Down syndrome 227
drug trafficking 157–66, 170
Duna people 399

Durkheim, Émile 98
Durrell, Gerald 183
Dutch famine (1944) 233
dwelling 514

economics of Argentina 487–8
Edna 53, 62
efficacy 389–93
embodiment 2, 7–9, 19–20, 83–4, 246–9, 426–31
  agency 137–43
  as power116–17
  bioethics 73, 74, 82, 83–4
  bodies in motion 481, 483, 499
  colonialism 119
  components of corporeality 147–9
  concept and theory 388–9
  cultural phenomenology 137–54
  ethnography 46–70
  fetal bodies 322–3, 333
  genocide 453–5
  genomics 224–5, 229–30, 234
  haptic creativity 239, 245, 246–9, 258
  hybridity 264–6
  illness 149–52, 153–4
  masculinities 307–8, 310–11, 315, 318
  neoliberalism 353–67
  personhood 388–401
  race 420, 421, 426–31
  re-membered practices 460–61
  reproduction 403–4
  senses 393–4, 441, 442, 446
  sensorial memory 451–64
  sexual difference 143–7, 153–4
  sport and impairment 276–80, 283–5, 289
  subjectivity 210–11
  theorization 509–10
  tombois 209–10, 211–21
  transgender studies 208–10
  virtuality 504–5, 506–17
emotional labor 28, 38–42
emotions 2, 31–8
  epistemologies 31–8, 39
  neoliberalism 38–42
  pain 373, 378
  racial learning and affect 25–6, 28–43
empathy 458–60, 463–4
  pain 375, 376, 379
emplacement 397–9
enskillment 393
entrepreneurship 360–64
  affective labor 364–7
  neoliberalism 353–5, 356–67
  of self 355, 356, 367
environmental illness (EI) 149, 151–2, 153–4
epigenetics 224, 231–2, 236, 301–4
  kinship 293, 296, 300, 301–4, 305
epigenomics 223–4, 232–3
erectile dysfunction (ED) 308, 310–12, 314–15, 318
Eshi Otawara (Second Life) 507–8
ethnography 46–8, 175–201, 442–6
  bioethics 81
  biopower 93
  bodiliness 104
  embodiment 396–7, 398
  genomics 227, 228
  hybridity 263
  impairment 276, 279, 286–7, 288
  Mexican border 157–9, 166
  neoliberalism 355–6, 366, 367
  reproduction 404, 406–8, 416
  senses 441, 442–6, 447
  sensorial memory 452, 454, 455
  tasting food 467, 470, 471
  virtuality 504, 508–9, 515, 516–17
Evers, Medgar 182–3
experimental methods 244–6

face-work 458–60
families we make 51–3, 68, 69
  gay community 51–3, 55–6, 59–69
family 218–20
  genomics 228–9, 235–6
  Holocaust descendants 451–64
  Kayapo 102, 110
  masculinities 309–13, 316
  tombois 211–20
farming 346, 347–50
Farquhar, Judith 444–5
female genital mutilation (FGM) 124–5, 129–30, 132
feminism 144, 292–3, 416
  fetal bodies 321–2, 323, 327, 328, 333
  neoliberalism 357–8, 360, 363, 366–7
  virtuality 510, 511
femininity 209, 210, 216–18
  tombois 214–20
fetuses 320–33
  personhood 404–5, 416
food 293–305, 329, 444–5, 460, 491–2
  epigenetics 301–4
  sexuality 299–300
  taste 467–78
forensic pathology 185–6
Foucault, Michel 138, 142–3, 152, 160, 425, 444
  biopolitics 226
  biopower 86–91, 93, 95, 97–9, 349
  bodies in motion 481, 483
  colonialism 120, 123
  sexuality 145
  sport 279, 282, 286

freak shows 342, 347
freedom 68–9
Freud, Sigmund 4, 98, 172
functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) 375

gate control theory 374, 383
gay community 49–69
gay music 50
gender 1, 307–18, 398
  affective labor 357–8, 359, 363, 364–7
  Arts and Crafts Movement 14
  colonialism 120, 123–32
  fetal abortion 328–9
  food 295–305
  Kayapo 106–7, 108, 112–14, 116
  mortality rates 411
  reproduction 404–8, 410–11, 413–16
genetic determinism 225, 230, 231–2, 233
geneticization 226
genetics 223–4, 230–33
  modification 345, 347–8, 349, 350
  susceptibility 230–31, 234–6
  testing 226–30, 234–5
genocide 451–64
genomics 223–36
  divining futures 234–6
  revealing genetic body 226–7
geologist (Dawn) 240, 244–7, 251, 254, 256–7
Giriama people 395–6
globalization 355–6
glossolalia 391
gossip 399–401
greenwashing 325–6
Government Child Welfare Center 131
governmentality 86, 87–8
Griffin, John Howard 426, 427

Habermas, Jürgen 87, 89–90, 91, 95
habitus 150–51, 282–6, 393, 394
  Bourdieu 27, 29, 38, 138, 140–42, 176, 250, 282–4, 393, 430
  excitable 250–53, 254
  haptic creativity 246
  racialization 430
Haddon, A. C. 437
Hagen people 391–4, 397–400
  Christianity 394–5
  Female Spirit 394
hair 107–8, 116
haptics 239–58
hearing 435–6, 438–41, 443–4
Heidegger, Martin 510, 514, 517
heredity 224–5, 235, 293, 296
Hidalgo, Miguel 165
high art 5, 12
*hijra* 209
Hills-Young, Elaine 130–31
historical experience of race 429–30
HIV/AIDS 269, 429, 430, 431
Holocaust 451–3, 455–8, 460–63
homophobia 63, 64, 65
homosexuality 207, 210, 211
  gay community 49–69
  *see also* tombois
Horkheimer, Max 4–5
housing 13–14
Huizinga, Johan 60, 61, 66
human–animal border 340–43, 344
Human Genome Project 233
Huntington disease 227–8
Husserl 139, 146, 147, 428, 513
hybridity 262–72
  *Avatar* 505
hypersensitive Agency Detection Device (HADD) 396–7

identity 53–5, 338, 442–3
  bodiliness 104–5, 106–7, 108, 111–13
  gay community 49–55, 59–61, 69
  racialization 421–5
  tombois 211–12, 215, 219, 220–21
Ifaluk people 397
Ihanzu people 398
illness and disease 105–6, 153–4, 301–2, 304–5
  bioethics 74–83
  chronic fatigue 150–51, 153–4
  diabetes 294, 295, 298, 300, 303–4
  environmental 151–2, 153–4
  genomics 223–4, 226–30, 233, 234–6
  legitimacy 153–4
  narratives 381–2
  pain 370–83
  phantom limbs 149–50, 153, 154
immigration and migration 28–31, 166–9, 295, 344
  Mexican border 157–62, 164, 166–9
  mistaken cremation 179
  racial learning and affect 24–42
  repatriation of remains 158–9, 161, 166–70
  returners 27, 31–4, 37
  transnational racial systems 31–8
  transnationalism 486–7
impairment 276–89
  acquired 279–80
  congenital 279–80
imperialism 26
improvisation 283, 285
  haptic creativity 244–5, 247–9, 251, 254–6
infertility 307, 312–13, 315–17, 318
infibulations 124–5, 126, 127, 128, 130
informed consent 77

Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama (INCAP) 302–4
intelligibility 389–93
intentionality 139, 141–2
Internet 178, 509, 516
  biopower 91–2, 93–7
  images of dead bodies 163–4
intersubjectivity 458–60
interspeciality 262, 265–6, 267, 271–2
  intimacy 267–70
intimacy 266, 267–70
intra–action 248, 252, 256
intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) 313, 317
Irigaray, Luce 144–5
Isherwood, Christopher 65
IVF 313, 316–17, 323, 350, 415

James the Dismembered, St 180
Janice 57–8
Javanese people 436
Jews 420, 424, 452
  Holocaust 451–3, 455–8, 460–63
Johannsen, Wilhelm 225

Kant, Immanuel 3–4, 343
Kayapo people 102–17, 159
kidneys 176–8
kinship 292–305
  humans / animals 340–41
  hybridity 263–71
Kittredge, Susan Cooke 190–93, 200–201
Knoble, Dean 185, 186
Kristeva, Julia 144, 145–6
Kroeber, Alfred 196–8
Kuranko people 440–41

labor in the Sudan 120–22, 125
language 440
  pain 373, 377, 381–2, 383
  personhood 389, 390–91, 393, 396
late–onset Alzheimer disease 234–6
Latin–Americans and Latinos 24–43
lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) 208, 209
Le Van Kim, Renaud 426–7
Lindberg, Charles 175
lip plates and plugs 339

MacDougall, William 437, 439
magic 389–90, 392, 394, 401
magical thinking 172–3
Magritte, Rene *The Treachery of Images* 72, 76
Malinowski, Bronislaw 390
Mama Carla 293–4, 295–300, 301, 304
Mary, the Virgin 145–6
masks 111–14
Mastromarino, Michael 191–2
Marx, Karl and Marxism 4–5, 7–9, 40, 444
  Arts and Crafts Movement 7–9, 11
  gay community 51, 58
*Matrix* trilogy (movies) 506
Mbeki, President Thabo 429, 430
McLuhan, Marshall 97
media 87–987
medical tourism 484–5, 487–98, 499
Melpa people 400
Mencius 444
mental health 363, 373, 378, 379, 380
Merleau–Ponty, Maurice 6, 7, 17, 27, 38, 139–40
  autoethnography 48, 51, 53, 58–9, 68
  embodiment 138–43, 514
  embodiment memory 453, 456, 461, 462
  existence 138
  flesh 513
  haptic creativity 246, 249, 251, 255
  movement 146–7
  phantom limb 176, 513–14
  racialization 428, 430
  sexuality 145
  sport 279, 284–7
  touch 437
  virtuality 513–14, 516
meta–sentiments 39
methylation 233
middle voice 246–9
mid–embodiments 240, 249, 251, 255
midwives 125–31
Midwives Training School (MTS) 125–31
migration *see* immigration and migration
Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) 376
*Miracle in Rome* (movie) 181
mirror-box 149
monsters 266, 267, 269, 271–2
Morris, William 8–9, 11–13, 15, 19
movement 146–7
  phantom limb 149–50
Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) 149, 151–2, 153–4
Mütter Museum of Anatomy and Pathology 77–9
Myers, Charles 437, 438, 439

narrativization 82–3
National Geographic 330, 331–2
neoliberalism 2, 38–42, 353–67
  racial learning and affect 25, 28, 30, 38–42, 43
neuroimaging 76, 372, 375, 383
Newman, Cardinal John Henry 181–2, 183
news 87, 88–91, 93–7
  online 87–8, 93–7
newspapers 89–90, 97
Nicelli, Joseph 191–2

*noman* 397, 398
now–time 397–9
nursing homes 473–7

objectification 102, 115–16, 117
  racialization 425–6, 431
Olaf, St, legs of 183
Ongee people 441
Online News Association 94
organ transplantation 83, 186–90, 194, 345
  bio–piracy 193–6
  death of liver donor 182
  eyes 186–8
  harvesting 186–93
  hybridity 265–72
  kidneys 176–8

pain 7, 370–83, 454
  chronic 81–2, 371, 375, 376–80, 381–3
  defined 371, 373
  narratives 381–2
  neurological approach 373–5
  phantom limb 149–50, 176, 375
  psychogenic 375, 379, 383
Paiwan people 399, 400
Pangia people 393
Paralympic Games 276–83
participatory thinking 463
patient records 75, 82
performativity 243–4, 248, 389
personhood 26–7, 388–401, 508
  fetus 404–5, 416
personscapes 393–4
phantom kidneys 176–8
phantom limbs 149–50, 153, 154, 375
  Merleau–Ponty 176, 513–14
pigs 347, 349
  hybridity 265–6, 268, 269–70, 272
Plato 73, 435
  chora 511, 512, 514, 515
pluralisation of place 504, 513–15, 517
poison 471
politics 4–5, 47, 159–61, 515–17
  camp 61–2
  gay community 50–51, 61–2, 63, 69
  Mexican border 157–8, 159–61, 169–70
*popokl* 400
positron emission tomography (PET) 375
possession and divination 395–6
postgenomics 224–5
postmodernism 9–10
post–socialism 2, 403–16
post–structuralism 88, 98, 483
post–traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) 451, 452–3
posture 139, 141, 142–3
power relations 1, 138, 142–3
primates 265–6, 268–72
primordial frivolity 59
productive labor 357–8, 363, 366, 367
pronatalism 408–13, 414–15
psychophysics 437, 438, 439
psychosocial disorder 451, 453
publicity 88–91
  digital 91–3, 94, 96, 98–9

queens 52, 54, 61
Queer theory 59

race 1, 24–43, 50, 344, 485–8
  colonialism 120, 121, 123
  historical pursuit of 429–30
  masculinities 308–10
  senses 436, 437–8, 439, 446
racial democracy 26, 28, 32, 35, 40, 42
racial discrimination 419–20, 421, 423–8, 430
racialization 24–9, 31–3, 35–6, 38–43, 344, 419–31
rain-making 398
recognition 421, 423–5, 427, 431
recursive publicity 92–3
redistribution–recognition dilemma 424
rehabilitation 468–9, 471–3, 477, 478
reincarnation 454
religion 50, 145–6, 338, 391
  assisted reproduction 317, 318
  beatification 181–2
  body love 178
  circumcision 124–30
  genomics 227, 229
  human–animal borders 340–42, 344
  masculinities 309
  neoliberalism 360, 361–3, 367
  possession and divination 395–6
  relics 183–4, 193–4
  resurrection 179–81, 193
  rituals 173–4, 178–80, 394–5
  tombois 211, 213–14
reproduction 294–5, 299–300, 348, 403–16
  contraception 409, 411–13, 416
  epigenetics 301–4, 305
  masculinities 307–18
  second child 406–8, 409–10, 411–13
reproductive labor 357–8, 363, 366, 367
resentment 41
responsivity 247–8, 249, 253–7
Resurrection Men 193
return of the repressed 172, 196, 200–201
rituals 67, 68, 394–5
  commemorative practices 454
  death 173–4, 178–80
  embodiment 389–90, 393–4, 398, 401
  Kuranko male initiation 440–41
  magic 389–90, 392, 394, 401
  personhood 389–9, 401

Rivers, W. H. R. 437, 438, 439
rock–climbing story 241–2, 243, 249, 255
Romantic Movement 12
rupture 399–401

Sachs, Albie 176
Sartre, Jean–Paul 422, 428
scaling 253–7
Schiavo, Terri 76
Second Life 504, 506–8, 511, 514
senses 2, 6, 435–47
  embodiment 393–4
  overstimulation 4–5, 10, 20
sensorial memory 451–64
sensuousness 286–7
sentient tropism 139–40
severed heads 162–6
sexual difference 137, 143–9, 153–4
sexuality 87, 145, 510
  acting hard 42–3
  autoethnography 49–68
  bodiliness 106, 107–8
  food 299–300, 304–5
  masculinities 307–18
  tombois 218–19
shape–shifting 389, 400
Sheets-Johnstone, Maxine 144, 146–7
shell-shock 452
shoes 460–61, 462
sickle cell 229
sight 15–16, 435–6, 437–9, 441
Sitshetshe's eyes, Andrew 186–8
skin and the Kayapo 105–8, 116
slavery 339, 345, 350
  Anlo–Ewe 442–3
  human–animal borders 343–4
  Sudan 120–22, 125
smell 393, 435, 437–9, 440–41
  food 470, 473–4, 476
  sensorial memory 454, 456, 462
smoking 213, 214–17, 219
social body 106–8
social condition of race 429
social skin 106–8
socialization 157–9, 338–9, 345
sociology 421, 425, 431
sociomorals 264–6
  hybridity 262–7, 269–72
somatic modes of attention 455–8, 459, 461
somatization 452–3
Songhay people 442
Sontag, Susan 54, 56–7, 64
Sophocles 512
speech as sense 436, 437
sport 276–89
standpoint epistemology 286–7
Stickley, Gustav 9, 13–14, 19
Stoller, Paul 442
strategic research material (SRM) 148, 154
street therapists 26, 40, 43
Stumpf, Hilda 130
style 7–8, 55, 57, 58–9
subjectification 115
subjection 425, 431
subjectivation 425, 431
subjectivity 210, 219–20
surgery 483–98, 499
susceptibility 293
symbolization 80–82

taste 435–6, 438, 440, 444–5
  food 467–78
  function 470–73, 478
  sensorial memory 453
  waning enjoyment 473–7, 478
tattooing 339, 342, 345, 349, 350
Taussig, Michael 441–2
tea ceremony 8
techne 510–11, 512, 513, 514, 515
TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) 376
terrorism 309
testosterone 209
thanatopolitics 159–60
Theory of Mind (ToM) 396
Tierra del Fuego people 442
Tlingit Indians 199–200, 339, 340
tombois 209, 211–21
  masculine competence 218–21
  masculine feelings 212–14
Torres Straits expedition 437–9
touch 15–16, 435–6, 437–40
transgendered people 207–21
transmigration 341
transnational racial systems 31–8
transnationalism 481–99
transsexuals 208
transvestites 50, 52
trauma survivors 451–64
travesti 209
Travolta, John 60
Trobriands 390
Tzotzil people 441

ultramodern frivolity 59
ultrasound 322, 324–5, 328, 329, 331

Viagra 310–12
Vietnam veterans 452
Violence-Inhibition Mechanism (VIM) 396
Virgin Mary 145–6
virtual reality 149–50

virtuality 1, 399–401, 504–17
Visible Human Project 245
Vision *see* sight
visualization tools 239–47, 253–7, 258
Vitacereal 303
vitality 472–3, 478
vocables 391, 392

Wal–Mart 298–9
Warner, Michael 87, 89, 90, 91
Waugh, Evelyn *Brideshead Revisited* 65
Wilde, Oscar 54, 55, 63
Wolff, Mabel and Gertrude 125–30
World Trade Center 180

xenotransplantation 265–72, 349

*yaen'* 397
Yahi Indians 173, 196–8, 200–201
Yapese people 397

*zar* 123–4, 126, 132

